

1921 - Literature, Poetry, Criticism, and Politics

Selections from The Freeman, The Crisis, The Nation, and The Dial.



John Gould Fletcher, The Freeman



Walter F. White, The Crisis



Anton Chekhov

THE FREEMAN

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(focus here is on the criticism by poet John Gould Fletcher,
and a running series on Anton Chekhov-- Ed.)

SCATTERED GLEAMS.

Helen Dircks. New York: I "Passenger." George H. Doran Co.

In the dreary, deadly year of 1918, when everything in London and the world at large seemed to be at a stand still, there appeared a slender volume entitled "Finding," which contained a few stray, scattered gleams of true poetic impulse. The author of that book, a young lady named Helen Dircks, has now produced another collection entitled "Passenger"; an equally slender volume, equally liable with its predecessor to be dismissed by super-trained critics as a phenomenon of no importance. I am not yet aware than anything human can be of no importance to the critic; and the most outwardly "unimportant" volume may contain as much, if not more, matter for reflection to him as the most world-resounding "masterpiece."

This work is, above all, feminine. Miss Dircks writes about what engages her sympathies--and her sympathies are as immediate and direct as the range of her imaginative understanding is limited. This is most assuredly a specifically feminine trait. To say so much is not in any sense to imply that the feminine nature is inferior to the masculine. On the contrary, it is quite impossible to conceive of a masculine poet who is without certain elements in his nature which act in a similar way, and which immediately engage his sympathies in some aspects of the world which he sees about him. The difference between the feminine and the masculine nature in poets is rather that the male, confronted with the necessity of portraying or presenting what he has felt, refers his imagination to the scrutiny of some general reader, fixed already in his mind; the woman, on the other hand, in so far as she is purely a woman, refers every conception she has formed of the world inevitably back to herself. Miss Dircks, in the book that lies before me, as in her former volume, is purely a woman, writing as a woman. ' The beauty she achieves is entirely unpremeditated. The badness is equally unpremeditated. Both are absolutely her own.

Whether in her sonnets or in her vers libres, the note is never forced to harmonize with any prevailing fashion:

*You are a vendor
Of a curious merchandise—
The careless touch,
The quick caress,
~
The fleeting glance;
And yet I come so willingly to buy,
And pay
With the gold-dust of my heart
And heavy lead of precious thoughts.*

*Since we are so much you and I, and we
Have all the world to be our retinue,
I would be scrupulous and yet be new
To this so strange perfection, ohildishly;
Oh, I would have you understand this me
So that each word I speak you find in you
Its chime for chime, and everything I do
A shadow of your knowing shadow be.*

These brief examples are worth reams of detailed argument about how one ought to write. In them, the subject and the way in which it is treated are entirely one. It is from this standpoint that we are permitted to judge of the advance of their author, or of the greatest poet dealing with far higher themes. No other standpoint is critically permissible.

Miss Dircks may be the tiniest-voiced of England's singers, but she is a poet.
JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

May 4 1921
CHEKHOV'S NOTEBOOK.

Tm: dog walked in the street and was ashamed of its crooked legs.

THE difference between men and women: a woman, as she grows old gives herself up more and more to female affairs; a man, as he grows old withdraws himself more and more from female affairs.

THAT sudden and ill-timed love-affair may be compared with this: you take boys somewhere for a walk; the walk is jolly and interesting—and suddenly one of them gorges himself with oil-paint.

A SCHOLAR, without talent, a blockhead, worked for twenty-four years and produced not-hing good, gave to

the world only scholars as untalented and as narrow minded as himself. At night he secretly bound books that was his true vocat-ion: in that he was an artist and felt the joy of it. There came to him a bookbinder, who loved learning and studied secretly at night.

Bur perhaps the universe is suspended on the tooth of some monster.

How pleasant it is to respect people! When I see books, I am not concerned with how the authors loved or played cards; I see only their marvellous works.

To demand that the woman one loves should be pure is egotistical: to look for that in a woman which I have not got myself is not love, but worship, since one ought to love one's equals.

THE so-called pure childlike joy of life is animal joy. I CAN not bear the crying of children, but when my child cries, I don't hear.

A scoousov treats a lady to dinner in a restaurant. He has only one rouble, twenty kopeks. The bill comes to four roubles, thirty kopeks. He has no money and begins to cry. The proprietor boxes his ears. He was talking to the lady about Abyssinia.

A MAN, who, to judge from his appearance, loves nothing but sausages and sauerkraut.

We judge human activities by their goal; that' activity is great of which the goal is great.

His income is twenty-five to fifty thousand, and yet out of poverty he shoots himself.

You drive on the Nevski, you look to the left on the Haymarket; the clouds are the colour of smoke, the ball of the setting sun purple—Dante's hell!

TERRIBLE poverty, desperate situation. The mother a widow, her daughter a very ugly girl. At last the mother takes courage and advises the daughter to go on the streets. She herself when young went on the streets without her husband's knowledge in order to get money for her dresses; she has some experience. She instructs her daughter. The latter goes out, walks all night; not a single man takes her; she is ugly. A couple of days later, three young rascals on the boulevard take her. She brought home a note which turned out to be a lottery ticket no longer valid.

Two wives: one in Petersburg, the other in Kertch. Constant rows, threats, telegrams. They nearly reduce him to suicide. At last he finds a way: he settles them both in the same house. They are perplexed, petrified; they grow silent and quiet down.

AND I dreamt that, as it were, what I considered reality

was a dream, and the dream was reality.
I observe that after marriage people cease to be curious.
IT usually takes as much time to feel happy as to wind up one's watch.

A DIRTY tavern near the station. In every tavern like that, you will find salted white sturgeon with horse radish. What a lot of sturgeon must be salted in Russia!
Z. Goes on Sundays to the Sukharevka [a market-place in Moscow] to look for books; he finds a book, written by his father, with the inscription: "to darling Nadya from the author."

A GOVERNMENT-OFFICIAL wears on his chest the portrait of the Governor's wife; he feeds a turkey on nuts and makes her a present of it.

ONE should be mentally clear, morally pure, and physically tidy.

It was said of a certain lady that she had a cat's factory; her lover tortured the cats by treading on their tails.

AN officer and his wife went to the baths together, and both were bathed by the orderly, whom they evidently did not consider a man.

"AND now he appeared with all his decorations."

"What decorations has he got?"

"He has a bronze medal for the census of 1897."

A GOVERNMENT-CLERK gave his son a thrashing because he had only obtained five marks in all his subjects at school. It seemed to him not good enough. When he was told that he was in the wrong, that five is the highest mark obtainable, he thrashed his son again—out of vexation with himself.

A very good man has such a face that people take him for a detective; he is suspected of having stolen shirt studs.

A SERIOUS phlegmatic doctor fell in love with a girl who danced very well, and, to please her, he started to learn a mazurka.

THE hen-sparrow believes that her cock-sparrow is not chirping but singing beautifully.

WHEN one is peacefully at home, life seems ordinary, but as soon as one walks into the street and begins to observe, to question women, for instance, then life becomes terrible. The neighbourhood of Patriarshi Prudy [a park and street in Moscow] looks quiet and peaceful, but in reality life there is hell.

THESE red-faced young and old women are so healthy
that steam seems to exhale from them.
THE estate will soon be brought under the hammer; there
is poverty all round; and the footmen are still dressed
like jesters.

THERE has been an increase not in the number of nervous
diseases and nervous patients, but in the number of
doctors able to study those diseases.

THE more refined the more unhappy.

LIFE does not agree with philosophy: there is no happi-
ness which is not idleness and only the useless is
pleasurable.

(To be continued.)

WALT WHITMAN'S BEGINNINGS.

“The Gathering of the Forces.”

Igtlack and Cleveland Rodgers.

Walt Whitman. Edited by John

2 vols. New York: G. P. Putnam's

Howevsn we rank Whitman as a teacher, there can be
no question about his position as a poet'. The best opinion
in England, while taking offence at the coarseness of one
side of his teaching, early declared him to be one of the
world's great poets; the best opinion of France, while
objecting somewhat to the strain of Puritan preacher
and social reformer that lay in him, has followed suit;
the best opinion of Germany and Russia is making up
its mind to accept him, if it has not done so already.

Whitman as a poet belongs to the world; if he
is still unread or unappreciated in America, it is because
America, so far, has scarcely begun to understand the
first principle of literary taste: that loftiness and pro-
fundity of theme, sustained thought, full and complete
expression, are the inevitable factors which make for
great poetry, wherever it may appear.

The study, therefore, of VWhitman's genesis is, at bot-
tom, purely a psychological one. As the present genera-
tion gets further and further away from the giants of the
past, it' interests us to know exactly what it was that
made them giants. The answer in Whitman's case is
plain. As these two volumes' will demonstrate, Whitman
began life with a tremendous faith in America's destiny.
That faith was, in itself, but little justified by the scenes
and sights of his early manhood. The spectacle of the

dedication of Grace Church, attended by ranks of bloated, well-fed worshippers, while paupers stood with out on the pavement, must have been enough to give the most stout-hearted believer pause. The spectacle of the specious, gewgaw, hollow magnificence of the 'forties, described also by Dickens, must also have afforded this ardent young apostle of Americanism many a twinge of doubt. Whitman, too, might possibly have grown soured and sceptical, even with his great fund of love and faith for his country, had not his eye chanced to light upon a sentence of Emerson, quoted in these pages: "When we look at ourselves in the light of thought, we discover that our lives are embosomed in =beauty."

I, too, Whitman must have reflected at that moment, find my life not a mere waste, an aridity of daily journalism, a striving to little or no purpose, but, in its essence, filled with sheer beauty and faith triumphing over all obstacles. Should I not then speak what is in me? So he resigned his position as editor, fastened to his desk the phrase "Make the Work" and began to build the edifice of "Leaves of Grass," which turned out to be for him and for the world at large, not the preachment that he probably at first planned, nor the act of rebellion that others saw in his writing, but, essentially, a monument to great religious faith. Great religious faith is the essence of the world's greatest poems: Homer,]Eschylus. Dante, the epics of India. Shakespeare with his tragic 'doubt' and denial, Sophocles perhaps, Euripides certainly, have stood at the opposite end of the scale; but after the inner torment of Milton followed Shakespeare, after Euripides fled from Athens, poetry lay extinct and lifeless for many years.

The whole Occidental world is now rapidly losing faith in itself, and it is not likely that we shall see another Whitman, unless he arises in the East. Therefore we take a certain melancholy interest in this disinterring of relics from the journalistic youth of one who was greater than we are. These articles tell us little that is new about the man, except that he was not a rabid abolitionist, as many have supposed, but, on the contrary, sufficiently a believer in popular liberty to accept the moderate solution of the slavery problem advocated by Lincoln. If the re-publication of all this early journalistic work tends to attract attention to the greater message of individual faith and of individual rebellion against law which he left in "Leaves of Grass," much good may perhaps even yet be done. The outstanding impression that these two volumes leave upon the mind is: that Whitman in his demand for beauty and in his insistence upon a native American literature, followed the lead established for him

by Poe; that in his gospel of self-reliance and optimistic self-glorification he followed Emerson; that in his detestation of laws, customs, ordinances, he was a pupil of Thoreau. Therefore "Leaves of Grass" was produced, not only because Whitman was ripe for the times. but because the times _were_ ripe for him. Let this be a lesson to all those critics who say that 'we can examine any work of art without' a study of sociology.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

THE FREEMAN [25 May, 1921

ART AND LIFE.

LIFE. in itself, is useless. Even if Utopia were to arrive to-morrow, there would still be no reason why we should eat, drink, and beget our kind, and work and die; no reason, that is, to which our rationality could give consent. Whether consciously or not, we live because we are mystics to the extent of believing that there is some purpose in life; and not only in life in general, but in our own individual lives in particular, and that we are doomed to accomplish this purpose. If we live long, and are consistently honest with ourselves, or if we are sufficiently disinterested to think about the matter, we are driven to admit that the whole of mankind's history, as well as our own, offers overwhelming evidence against this assumption. The idea of a purpose, or of accomplishing any thing permanent or even of a God controlling our actions, becomes more and more impossible to maintain, the more we study life, except by straining our reason to accept something that reason by itself can not maintain; and this is either mystical faith, or midsummer madness, or animal self-conceit. Reasonably speaking, there is no reason why we should live at all. Suicide were far better, and infinitely nobler, in the majority of cases. Even if we were entirely happy and free, and had not the excuse of misery to make us regard the nothingness of things, life would still be useless. Those who are intelligent must learn to put up with this inconvenient truth; they must learn to accept life, as Thoreau said, "with out principle."

Art is also, by every test we can apply to it, useless. The world has known art now for some thousands of years but is none the better for it. Even the nations that have only recently begun to desire some art to relieve their ugliness, as in America, will soon find out that art does not and can not better their daily lives. Am I at all better for having read Homer, Dante, Rabelais, Shakespeare, Whitman, and Tolstoy? Is anyone at all better for having heard Bach's B minor Mass,

or for seeing the Sistine ceiling? On the contrary, a human being is good only in so far as he is able to find good in him self—an entirely different proceeding from that of saturating one-self with art. Art offers no panacea for human ills, but rather heightens the tragedy inherent in them by making them beautiful. Witness Beethoven's music, or "King Lear." Leibnitz, I believe, said that the sum total of human energy in every age was exactly the same, and Whitman asserted that "there will never be any more good or evil than there is now." Ethics may seek only the good, but art is not ethics, any more than life is. The Man who most of all desired that life should become not evil, but good, died on the Cross; the artist, if he wishes his art to become entirely good, must accept his cross also in life. Life and art are akin in this, that they escape equally the laws which we seek to impose upon them.

What, then, is art? Is not the answer simply this; that art is life, life heightened to the point of imaginative realization, the essential quality of an experience sublimated by being consciously re-created? Knowing not what life is, nor why it exists, we seek to re-create it once more in some form that corresponds most closely with our inner desire to understand it and to control it. The Palaeolithic artists who drew on their cave-walls bisons, wild boars and horses, may have come from a land where such game was scarce, or may have sought, by making such representations, to ensure their own success in its capture. The artist of to-day seeks merely to restate the old elementary problem--what does the life about him mean? Art therefore can not be either entirely good or evil, neither can it be encouraged or destroyed, except through the existence of finer or poorer art. If human life were to cease to exist, art itself would cease to exist. If life were suddenly to become perfect, art would still be necessary; but if art were to become universal and perfect, life could no longer be lived. Amid all the fluctuations of history, or the misfortunes of individual lives, one thing alone remains certain; that art is life.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

CHEKHOV'S NOTEBOOK.

A MAN whose madness takes the form of an idea that he is a ghost walks at night.

A SENTIMENTAL man, like Lavrov, has moments of pleasant emotion and makes the request: "Write a letter to my auntie in Briansk; she is a darling . . ."

AN officer at a doctor's. The money on a plate. The doctor can see in the looking-glass that the patient takes twenty-five roubles from the plate and pays him with it.

RUSSIA is nobody's country!

Z. WHO is always saying banal things: "With the agility of a bear," "on one's favourite corn."

A SAVINGS BANK² the clerk, a very nice man, looks down on the bank, considers it useless—and yet goes on working there.

A RADICAL lady, who crosses herself at night, is secretly full of prejudice and superstition, hears that in order to be happy one should boil a black cat by night. She steals a cat and tries to boil it.

A PUBusnEn's twenty-fifth anniversary. Tears, a speech: "I ofi'er ten roubles to the literary fund, the interest to be paid to the poorest writer, but on condition that a special committee is appointed to work out the rules according to which the distribution shall be made.

I-r was a grand forest of timber, but a Government Conservator was appointed, and in two years time there was no more timber owing to the caterpillar pest'.

N. ONCE had his clothes torn by dogs, and now, when he pays a call anywhere, he asks: "Are there any dogs here?"

"A LARGE selection of cig.s"—so read X. every day when he went down the street, and wondered how one could deal only in cigs and who wanted them. [Cigs in Russian is a kind of fish.] It took him thirty years before WE are tired out by servility and hypocrisy.

A YOUNG pimp, in order to keep up his powers, always eats garlic. ,

Tell me his subject

"I want to paint a portrait

Suggest a subject." (A lost in optical scan - Ed)

"I HAVE not read Herbert Spencer.

jects. What' does he write about."
panel for the Paris exhibition.
wearisome lady.)

THE idle, so-called governing classes can not remain long without war. When there is no war they are bored. idleness fatigues and irritates them, they do not know what they live for; they bite one another, try to say unpleasent things to one another, if possible with impunity, and the best of them make the greatest efforts not to bore the others and themselves. But when war comes, it possesses all, t'akes hold of the imagination, and the common misfortune unites all.

AN unfaithful wife is a large cold cutlet which one does not want to touch, because some one else has had it in his hands.

AN old maid writes a treatise: "The tram-line of piety." SHE had not sufficient skin on her face; in order to open her eyes she had to shut her mouth and vice versa. WHEN she raises her skirt and shows her lace petticoat, it is obvious that she dresses like a woman who is accustomed to be seen by men.

X. PHILOSOPHIZES "Take the word 'nose.' In Russia it seems something unmentionable, means the deuce knows what, one may say, the indecent part of the body, and in French it means wedding." And indeed X's nose was an indecent part of the body.

A GIRL, flirting, chatters: "All are afraid of me . . and the wind . . . ah, leave me alone! I shall never marry." And at home poverty, her father a regular drunkard. And if people could see how she and her mother work, how she screens her father, they would feel the deepest respect for her and would wonder why she is so ashamed of poverty and work, and is not ashamed of that chatter.

A RESTAURANT. An advanced conversation. Andrey Andreyevitch, a good-natured bourgeois, suddenly declares: "Do you know, gentlemen, I was once an anarchist!" Everyone is astonished. A. A. tells the following tale: a strict father, a technical school opened in the provincial town in a craze for technical education; they have no ideas and they did not know what to teach (since, if you are going to make shoemakers of all the inhabitants, who will buy the shoes?); he was expelled and his father turned him out of the house; he had to take a job as an assistant clerk on the squire's estate; he became enraged with the rich, the well-fed, and the

fat; the squire planted cherry trees, A. A. helped him, and suddenly a desire came over him to cut' off the squire's white fat fingers with his spade, as if it were by accident; and closing his eyes he struck a blow with his shovel as hard as he could, but it missed. Then he went away; the forest, the quiet in the field, rain; he longed for warmth, went to his aunt, she gave him tea and rolls—and his anarchism was gone. After the story there passed by the table, Councillor of State L. Immediately A. A. gets up and explains how L., Councillor of State, owns houses, etc.

I was apprenticed to a tailor. He cut the trousers; I did the sewing, but the stripe came down here right over the knee. Then I was apprenticed to a cabinetmaker. I was planing once when the plane flew out of my hands and hit the window; it broke the glass. The squire was a Lett, his name Sfoppev [which means "cork-screw"]; and he had an expression on his face as if he were going to wink and say: "Wouldn't it be nice to have a drink?" In the evenings he drank, drank by himself—and I felt hurt.

A DEALER in cider puts labels on his bottles with a crown printed on them. It irritates and vexes X. who torments himself with the idea that' a mere trader is usurping the crown. X. complains to the authorities, worries every one, seeks redress and so on; he dies from irritation and worry.

SENILE pomposity, senile vindictiveness. What a number of despicable old men I have known! How delightful when on a bright, frosty morning a new sleigh with a rug comes to the door.

IX. ARRIVED to take up duty at N.; he shows himself a despot: he is annoyed when some one else is a success; he becomes quite different in the presence of a third person; when a woman is present his tone changes; when he pours out wine, he first puts a little in his own glass and then helps the company;- when he walks with a lady he takes her arm; in general he tries to show refinement. He does not laugh at other people's jokes. "You repeat yourself"; "There is nothing new in that." Everyone is sick of him; he sermonizes. The old women nickname him the "top."

X. ALL his life spoke and wrote about the vices of servants and about the way to manage and control them, and he died deserted by everyone except his valet and his cook. (TO be continued.)

1 June, 1921] THE FREEMAN

CHEKI-IOV'S NOTEBOOK.

Or some writers each work taken separately is brilliant, but taken as a whole they are indefinite; of others each particular work represents nothing outstanding; but, for all that, taken as a whole they are distinct and brilliant.

N. RINGS at the door of an actress; he is nervous, his heart beats, at the critical moment he gets into a panic and runs away; the maid opens the door and sees nobody. He returns, rings again-but has not the courage to go in. In the end the porter comes out and gives him a thrashing.

A GENTLE quiet schoolmistress secretly beats her pupils. because she believes in the good of corporal punishment.

N.: "Not only the dog, but even the horses bowled."

N. MARRIES. His mother and sister see a great many faults in his wife; they are distressed, and only after four or 'five years realize that she is just like themselves.

AFTER his marriage everything——politics, literature, society——did not seem to him as interesting as they had before; but now every trifle concerning his wife and child became a most important matter.

"WHY are thy songs so short?" a bird was once asked.

"Is it because thou art short of breath?"—"I have very many songs and I should like to sing them all." (A. Daudet.)

IF you wish to become an optimist and understand life, stop believing what people say and write, observe and discover for yourself.

FAITH is a spiritual faculty; animals have not got it; savages and uncivilized people have merely fear and doubt. Only highly developed natures can have faith.

Dana is terrible, but still more terrible is the feeling that you might live for ever and never die.

Tut-: public really love in art that which is banal and long familiar, that to which they have grown accustomed.

A PROGRESSIVE, educated, young, but stingy school guardian inspects the school every day, makes long speeches there, but does not spend a penny on it; the school is falling to pieces, but he considers himself useful and necessary. The teacher hates him, but he does not notice it. The harm is great. Once the teacher, unable to stand

it any longer, facing him with anger and disgust, bursts out swearing at him.

TEACHERS "Pushkin's centenary should not be celebrated; he did nothing for the church."

Tut-: dog hates the teacher; they tell it not to bark at him; it looks, does not bark, only whimpers with rage.

Hussann and wife zealously followed X.'s idea and built up their life according to it as if it were a formula. Only just before death they asked themselves: "Perhaps that idea is wrong? Perhaps the saying 'mens sana in corpore sano' is untrue?"

I DETI-ZST2 a playful Jew, a radical Ukrainian, and a drunken German.

Tar: University brings out all abilities, including stupidity.

Tn!-: most intolerable people are provincial celebrities.

Owmo to our flightiness, because the majority of us are unable and unaccustomed to think or to look deeply into life's phenomena, nowhere else do people so often say: "How banal!" nowhere else do people regard so superficially, and often contemptuously other people's merits or serious questions. On the other hand, nowhere else does the authority of a name weigh so heavily as with us Russians, who have been abused by centuries of slavery and fear freedom . . .

A nocron advised a merchant to eat soup and chicken.

The merchant thought the advice ironical. At first he ate dinner of botztinia and pork, and then, as if recollecting the doctor's orders, ordered soup and chicken and swallowed them down too, thinking it a great joke.

A Mussuu-um for the salvation of his soul digs a well.

It would be a pleasant thing if each of us left a school, a well, or something like that, so that life should not pass away into eternity without leaving a trace behind it.

Tn: nobleman X. sold his estate to N. with all the furniture according to an inventory, but he took away everything else. even the oven-dampers, and after that N. hated all noblemen.

Tn: rich, intellectual X., of peasant origin, implored his son: "Mike, don't get out of your class. Be a peasant until you die, do not become a nobleman, nor a merchant, nor a bourgeois. If, as they say, the Zemstvo officer now has the right to inflict corporal punishment on peasants, then let him also have the right to punish you." He was proud of his peasant origin, he was even haughty about it.

THEY celebrated the birthday of an honest man. Took the opportunity to show off and praise one another. Only towards the end of the dinner they suddenly discovered

that the man had not been invited; they had forgotten.

A GENTLE quiet woman, getting into a temper says; "If I were a man, I would just bash your filthy mug."

Farms: Erammonn catches fish and puts them in his pocket; then, when he gets home, he takes out a fish at a time, as he wants it, and fries it.

(TO be continued.)

MISCELLANY.

It has lately occurred to me that we are in danger of having an emigration as well as an immigration problem on our hands. As things are now it is only those who come seeking an entry into this hospitable land whose vices and virtues are put to the test. Thus we are wont to exact from the newcomer an oath that he will not attempt to overthrow our glorious institutions by force and violence. We ask him to declare that anarchy and polygamy are not part of his philosophy. We also demand of him certain proofs of physical fitness. All this is natural enough, since these people, being foreigners, are mere barbarians and only the most elementary qualifications can reasonably be expected of them. But now the question is being asked in certain quarters: what about our emigrants? Ought not every citizen of the United States who attempts to leave this country to be submitted to a stringent examination? Thus, for example, an oath of faithful allegiance to the Volstead Act should undoubtedly be administered, and all prospective travellers should be required to abjure in advance the heresies prevalent amongst those unblessed by the tutelage of our parental government.

OUR diplomatic and consular agents abroad could be relied upon to extend the fields of espionage to which their activities are at present confined.

composed of free and honest men, which is to ask the immigrant citizen

In fact, the craving for

seems to be so prevalent that I have little doubt that an army of eager volunteers could easily be enlisted to supplement the efforts of the accredited representatives of this country abroad. Whenever the travelling American was tempted to forget his allegiance by drinking a glass of beer, he would know that the watchful eye of Uncle Sam was upon him. Already I have seen it stated in the public prints that American officials in foreign countries are to be warned against frequenting clubs or restaurants where liquor is served. If they are to be subjected to these limitations—and it seems to me to be quite logical

that they should be—they will probably be all the more zealous in spying upon their fellow citizens. In this way it will be possible for our Government to CODU'OI our expatriates and to make sure that they do not escape the high moral responsibilities of American citizenship..

I.\' due course, however, it will probably be found expedient to deny to the general public the right' of travelling in the unregenerate regions of the world. It is, after all, a war against the hosts of evil in which we are engaged, and in war-time passports are not issued indiscriminately. Apart from those irrevocably sinful elements in the community, whose deportation should be facilitated, only such people as are actually obliged to travel by the stern necessities of business, should be allowed to run the risk of being morally torpedoed. This restriction would have the advantage of reducing the number of persons to be supervised, and would put temptation entirely out of the reach of millions of our weaker brethren who might so easily fall by the wayside. At all costs America must be kept pure, and those who have dedicated themselves to that end will shrink from no sacrifices—of other people—to make it so.

.\liz. BizvAN's ingenuoiis proposal to purchase the island of Bimini to save Florida from bootlegging can not fail to awaken the nation to a sense of the enormity of its task. What is one Bimini amongst so many opportunities for sin flauitiing themselves beyond the three-mile limit? Obviously, as long as there remain new fields to be conquered by the censors, the moral condition of our people is in jeopardy. For these reasons it seems inevitable to me that a beginning must be made by a revision of the emigration-laws. Travel broadens the mind, said the wise saw of our grandfathers, but to-day our legislative grandmothers are saying that travel only too often broadens morals. Inevitably the flaming sword of the Department of Justice will bar all access to the Vanity Fairs across the seas, and the Statue of Liberty, turning its back upon Europe will bear with upraised hand the legend: "I_n prohibitions we trust."

X., wao keeps himself informed on such matters, tells me that a few weeks ago there was the greatest sort of a pothor throughout the length and breadth of Japan. The air buzzed with rumours. Japanese newspapers spoke with bated breath of "a serious affair affecting the nation and the imperial household." The matter was indeed so serious that it did not bear talking about in more than a whisper, for fear of committing the heinous crime of lése-majcslé. The newspapers had a particularly hard time of it between their desire to give the public all the news that seemed fit to print and the Government's de

cision that no news concerning this "affair" was to be published at all. The result was that a hundred pens were kept busy day after day in weaving stories about the word "serious" and the word "affair," stories that should say nothing and suggest everything. One fateful day a certain reckless paper took the bit in its teeth and announced the resignation of the tutor of the Crown Prince! The issue of that audacious daily was promptly suppressed. The same paper, then, actually attacked the Genro, or Elder Statesmen. Again it was suppressed. After that the harassed editor was reduced to publishing this kind of thing: which X. assures me is a literal translation from the paper in question:

We do not know what the alleged serious affair is. That is all we can say. We wish we could state that the affair had been satisfactorily settled, but even this we can not speak of in detail. What an awkward world this is! Imagine the bewilderment of the loyal son of Nippon upon reading such dark sayings over his breakfast. Nor was that all, for, as he went forth to work, he would be accosted by a stranger giving away a handbill, which again reminded him of "a certain matter," which he was earnestly adjured to "expedite" by prayers before the shrine of the late Emperor.

THUS, according to X., the whole Japanese nation talked by day and dreamed by night of "serious matters" and "certain affairs" till its own state of mind became far from certain and more than serious. But fortunately for the general sanity, a ray of light seemed to penetrate at last into the brains of the court clique and the tension was relieved by the publication of a few precious items of information. As a result the throne, the ministry, and the Genro survive and flourish as before. It is only the tutor aforementioned who is out of a job.

Tr: whole trouble, it seems, was due, as is so often the case, to a girl, the Princess Nagako Kuni, aged seven teen, and sister of Prince Shimazu, head of the Satsuma men, one of the two all-powerful clans of Japan. Now the head of the other clan, the Choshu, is Prince Yamagata, and Prince Yamagata is likewise head of the Genro. It seems, therefore, that the arrangement whereby the Princess Nagako Kuni is to become the bride of the Crown Prince was not at all to the liking of Prince Yamagata who, in trying to foil it, induced the Crown Prince's tutor to throw up his post by way of protest. Then, says X., the fat was in the fire. The air became surcharged with rumours and the sacred names of the Emperor and his son were bandied about from mouth to mouth, just as if they were ordinary mortals of like passions

with ourselves. Choshu, it appears, actually came to blows with Satsuma in the corridors of the royal palace. Bit by bit the trouble leaked out till at last the thing became a general scandal. The newspapers began to howl for the heads of those who had allowed things to come t'o such a pass, and chiefly they demanded the heads' of their chief enemies, the Elder Statesmen. But in the East as in the West they have a way of handling these delicate situations so that the little men suffer and the big men survive. Hence I am not surprised to learn that the Genro are safe and snug as ever; it is only the poor tutor who languishes in exile.

WHEN Congressmen come together to discuss the Army, its size and cost and value, this is the kind of blather that, in the main, passes for argument and (illegible text)

REPRESENTATIVE CARAWAY. My friend from Illinois, lilr. McKenzie, yesterday shed tears at the very thought of reducing the commissioned personnel. He told us that if you did not provide for these additional 4,000 officers you had as well tear down the flag and surrender. If he is correct about it. if they are the only thing that stands between our liberty and glavgry, why, you know we had as well kiss good-bye to liberty to-day as a day or two later. I know. (illegible text) knows, who knows anything at all about the Army—and I do not profess to know much and do not need to' know much in order to know as much as most of the Army officers kn0W (laughter)—that there was not a commissioned officer connected with the Regular Army in this late war whose name the next generation will know, except he may read (illegible) of Congress by which we conferred high rank on some of them.

REPRESENTATIVE DAMRSAY. Why, if We (illegible text) made by the illustrious heroes who have defended the United States throughout its history, if (illegible text) Grant and Sherman and Sheridan; if we wipe out the names of those who defended us in this last war and made our victory possible we will have erased and obliterated the most glorious and the most brilliant pages in our history, and I am sure that the membership of this House does not want, evm by 1"

THE THEATRE. A MODERN MORALITY.

THE theatrical season in New York is finishing gloriously with the Theatre Guild's production of "Liliom," translated from the Hungarian of Mr. Franz Molnar by Mr. Benjamin F. Glazer. Many people are finding fault with the Theatre Guild because it does not produce plays written by Americans. But why should it? (To be sure, it has tried to do so, with results that could only make the judicious grieve.) There are some half a hundred other theatres in New York, producing at least two hundred plays a year, the majority of them made in America. Why should not some of these theatres succour that great native masterpiece which is supposed to be begging at the managers' doors, and leave the Guild free to do just what it is doing now, and doing so well?

There have, in the past, been three plays by Mr. Franz Molnar mounted in this country. The first was a play of inferior quality called "The Devil," in which Mr. George Arliss and another actor appeared in simultaneous and rival productions. This was followed by a comedy of sex, subtle and sophisticated and brilliant, called "Where Ignorance is Bliss," and acted so badly that its failure was inevitable. Finally, Mr. Belasco mounted "The Phantom Rival," sufficiently well to give us something like a clear idea of Mr. Molnar's quality when at his best.

But meanwhile "Liliom" had been written and acted in Europe. It has been available, indeed, for a decade or more. If our half a hundred other theatres ignored it, why in the name of Melpomene should not the Theatre Guild find sufficient justification for its existence in rescuing such a play and putting it on the stage? However, it is characteristic of us to demand of the most willing and intelligent workers, the most work; and also to think that because the Guild has found in Europe plays of a quality which fits them for imaginative and modern methods of production, and gives them the strength and dignity of intellectual body and imaginative force, that therefore the Guild can find the same sort of plays in America. For ourself, we have been a play-reader, and beg leave to remain sceptical.

But to "Liliom." The great merit, the dominating charm of this extraordinary drama, lies in the fact that it doesn't mean a blessed thing that you don't want

it to mean, and anything that you do; in other words. it picks out its individual auditors and plays on their personal moods and emotions. That it fills the theatre every night goes to show how rich and vital a play it is. "Liliom" is the name of the hero. It is the Hungarian slang term for a rough-neck. Liliom is the barker at a Budapest Coney Island merry-go-round. 'We see a little servant girl fall in love with him, and we see him strangely softened by her love. For her sake he refuses to go back to the merry-go-round. But he does not go to work, either. He is an artist. he says, and can not work at a vulgar trade. Of course, he is a loafer. a gangster; he is plain no good. He beats poor Julie. who still loves him. Then he learns that he is to be come a father. Again he is softened. and also wildly elated at the prospect. A new wind of resolution sweeps over him, and he at once sets off with a pal to murder a cashier in a lone place under a railway embankment, and get his share of the treasure the cashier carries, so that the prospective offspring may start right in the world. But the cashier and the police foil this little plan, and rather than be sent to jail, Liliom kills himself with the knife intended for the cashier.

Then no more of Mr....

Whereupon the scene is transferred to heaven. to a court-room therein, "Division of Suicides." and Liliom is put on trial before two elderly officials who in appearance somewhat resemble Dr. Lyman Abbott and the late Rev. Thomas R. Slicer. Liliom is sentenced to fifteen years of purification by fire, after which time he will be permitted to revisit the earth for a single day, and if on that day he does a good deed. he will be permitted to enter at last the gate to celestial bliss.

In the last scene of all, Liliom comes back to earth. to find his daughter a pretty slip of a girl. She, taking him for a beggar, orders him to move on, and in a fit of old-time. earthly temper, he strikes her. That is what hell fire has done for him. As for her, she stands amazed at the fact that somebody has hit her. hit her hard, and yet it did not hurt. She asks her mother if such a thing is possible, and Julie. thinking of Liliom, replies that it is. That is the end of the play.

The story is curiously compounded of reality and fantasy; of interest in Liliom as a character-study and interest in Julie as a type of the woman who suf

fers—and loves; of an appeal to one's sense of humour and irony. and an appeal to one's tenderest emotions. VVith Liliom before the celestial magistrate. it mocks at heaven and its silly punishments; with Julie before her lover's corpse, it touches with a deep, passionate restraint the noble chords of sacrificial love. Always it asks of the actors, the stage-manager, the designer, their very best efforts.

Staged by Mr. Frank Reicher with careful realism and tactful restraint that gives a curious naturalness to the supernatural elements and a rhythmic contrast to the occasional climaxes and swift outbursts; designed by Mr. Lee Simonson with simplicity and great pictorial imagination, and also, quite evidently, without ostentatious expense, so that the focus of attention is always on the play; and, finally, acted by Mr. Joseph Schildkraut as Liliom, and by all the rest of the long cast, too, with an understanding of the drama, and with a unity of style rather surprising in a company gathered largely for this single production —“Liliom” makes an evening in our theatre as rare as it is exhilarating. You can sit back in your chair with that delicious sensation of security, that assurance that a good play is set before you by people who know what they are about, and all you have to do is to yield them your imagination fully and freely.

So long as the Theatre Guild is able to accomplish such a result with a play from the Hungarian. and is unable to accomplish it with a play from the American, I for one pray that they will stick to the Hungarian. The only reason I have for believing that a play of equal interest and value for the Guild's purposes exists in America is much the same reason Dr. Crothers gave for believing there is pirate-treasure hidden in the Lynn Woods. The fact, he said, that no treasure has ever been found there shows that it is an excellent place to hide treasure in; consequently treasure must be hidden there.

WALTER PRICHARD EATON.

BOOKS.

THE GREAT WAR-POET.

"Poems." Wilfred Owen. New York: B. Vi. Huebsch.

1 [June, 1921] THE FREEMAN

THE question as to who was the best war-poet was one that agitated many minds in England some three years ago. Then Messrs. Nichols, Graves and Sassoon were considered the leading candidates. Each had his admirers, and each had some claims to have made poetry out of his own particular experience of war's suffering. But the range of experience that each had found seemed somehow incomplete—though one suspected this incompleteness less in the case of Mr. Sassoon than in that of the others. The great war-poet had not yet turned up, and people repeated the comfortable formula that the experience of the war was too fresh and intense in the minds of men to be written about. But now that the more decent impulses of human beings in Europe are striving to forget that there was a war (despite the fact that it is still going on), the great war-poet suddenly speaks to us from the grave. His name is Wilfred Owen.'

There is only one test, so far as I know. whereby a critic may tell whether a poetic work possesses greatness. If the lines of any work so burn themselves into the consciousness of the critic that he is obliged to return again and again to them, to saturate his inner mind and memory with their slightest inflections of phrase, despite all the other poetry he has read, or may read, then the work in question is great poetry. It has the power of compelling the acceptance of our personality to it, since it springs utterly and completely from the author's own acceptance of the peculiar experience it implies. In it the author's body and soul have come for the moment fused through the medium of words, with the outward conditions of life which the work itself aims to set forth. The final artistic process, which is a process of acceptance of life and reassertion of one's acceptance, is made by these words complete. The style and technique become the thought itself ; the thought becomes the experience itself. This is great poetry.

By this standard, Wilfred Owen was a great poet; and since his material was taken out of an experience beyond the common range of our daily lives, we may go further still and say that he was among the greatest poets. To write well of an immense experience requires greater power than to write well of a small one;

and Wilfred Owen's experience, which came to him as all great experiences must, unsought, was one which few of us would have had courage to endure. Yet he alone had the courage not only to endure it, but to accept it: and, accepting it, to understand wherein might lie its significance for other men. Throughout these poems there sounds, like a lonely challenge to futurity, the message of a great, pure faith:

I, too, saw God through mud
The mud that cracked on cheeks when wretches smiled.
War brought more glory to their eyes than blood,
And gave their laughs more glee than shakes a child.
This holy exultation, making foul and ugly men into
the image of saints, took place in a land
Grey, cratered like the moon with hollow woe,
And fitted with great pocks and scabs of plagues.

where there was nothing heard but this anthem for
doomed youth:

What passing-bells for those that die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle.
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries for them; no prayers nor bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs.
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells—
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

But even this vision, terrible as it was, was not
enough for Wilfred Owen. Through the war he had
gained steadily in unflinching power to face his fate.
The great lesson of the war now burnt itself in his
mind, so that he, miraculously, was able to speak,
through lips already dedicated to death, the message
of a death better than his life:

*Friend, be very sure
I shall be better off with plants that share
More peaceably the meadow and the shower.
Soft rains shall touch me—as they could touch once.
And nothing but the sun shall make me ware.
Your guns may crash about me. I'll not hear.
Or if I wince I shall not know I wince.
This resignation is followed by a prouder, bolder
sacrifice:
Red lips are not so red
As the stained stones kissed by the English dead.
Kindness of wooed and wooer
Seems shame to their love pure.*

O Love, your eyes lose lure,
When I behold eyes blinded in my stead!
At the very end, there comes this icy note for the
future:
Now men will go content with what we spoiled.
Or, discontent, boil bloody, and be spilled.
They will be swift with swiftness of the tigreis,
None will break ranks, though nations trek from progress.
Coudge was mine and I had mystery,
Wisdom was mine and I had mastery;
To miss the march of this retreating world
Into vain citadels that are not walled.

To add one syllable to the appalling truth and
glory of such poetry as this would be to commit an
impertinence.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

THE FREEMAN [29 June, 1921]

THE ARTIST'S CONSCIENCE.

A LIVING English poet of international reputation has recently declared that "compared with the true artist's conscience, Tamerlane was tender-hearted."

Despite the unimpeachable authority of the source whence it sprung, this remzurk seems to betray an attitude universally common to the middle-class mind. To the comfortably-settled, wilfully-unimaginative, mentally-fossilized class that make up ninety-nine per cent of the population of this world, the artist is of course a rebel, an outlaw, a wastrel and even a criminal. The man who spends his life usefully in the pursuit of any ordinary occupation that enables him to support a wife and a number of children (though exactly what the usefulness of such a task, undertaken for a lifetime, is, no one has yet stated) can not of course imagine that anyone who performs a task which, in the majority of cases, does not even support himself, could possibly be possessed of a conscience. Therefore it is easy for such a man to dismiss the artist with the remark that he is akin to Tamerlane, or Caesar Borgia, or such-like; forgetting the remarkable fact that neither Tamerlane, nor Casar Borgia was an artist; nor did art greatly flourish because of their patronage.

We, however, who wish to arrive at the truth concerning both the artist and the ordinary man, need not be swayed by views which are obviously merely the result of being utterly unable either to think or to imagine; and we may reasonably ask ourselves, whether in fact the artist's conscience is not

the most subtle and delicate instrument that exists in the world? Disregarding for the moment the already too-numerous instances of artists in the past who have endured persecution, domestic unhappiness, poverty, misery and all manner of suffering in order to accomplish their life-work, let us merely take the artist of to-day as the subject of our inquiry. Is it not a fact that the artist of to-day, in order to produce any thing that is individual, original, and perfectly expressed, needs almost superhuman courage and constancy? In the first place, he must select out of the immense masses of material information furnished him by the present day (much of which is dead lumber), the topics which he proposes to study most deeply; in the second, he must either equal or make some advance upon the traditional art of the past; in the third, he must resolve to disregard the demands of the public for a purely machine-made article; in the fourth, he must determine in his heart to have nothing to do with merely passing notoriety, and so on. Such a task is one to which every ounce of a man's brain-power, every instant of his love, every effort of his endurance, must be freely given. It is a task so difficult to accomplish that the number of artists who have completely accomplished it in our day, may practically be counted on the fingers of one hand, and this despite the fact that the world is more populated to-day than it was a century ago, when the number of great artists was not less, but rather more.

How can anyone acquit himself of such a task except by acquiring or possessing a perfect conscience, which scrupulously performs, in utter oblivion of selfish or temporary interest, every duty laid upon it? If one is a painter, a sculptor or a musician the effort is undoubtedly difficult; but if one is a writer it may be even harder. The painter or sculptor may be able to live for a considerable time on the proceeds of a single bust or picture; the musician may at least be able to teach his art; but the writer, dealing in the common coinage of words, and at the mercy of the common type of editor, the commercial type of publisher and, beyond them, of the mob and its prejudices--the writer who conscientiously strives to be an artist, is indeed a pitiable and ludicrous figure of perfect folly. It may as well be admitted that most writers of our day do not even attempt to be artists. Instead they become journalists, lecturers, manuscript-pedlars or seekers for any form of cheap notoriety that may persuade them, for the moment, of their importance. The writer who desires to become an artist in our day either dies young, goes insane, retires from competition or learns completely to stifle the art-impulse.

Coleridge, the most acute critic of literature that England has possessed, employed one of the chapters of his "Biographia Literaria" in a refutation of the notion that poets are a

cantankerous race. He cited the example of Shakespeare, who was known to all his contemporaries as the "sweet" or "gentle Shakespeare." If the author of "King Lear" and "Coriolanus" appeared to his contemporaries as a tender hearted, mild, polite individual, and the present-day poet seems often exactly the reverse, the fault lies not in the artist's conscience, but in the all-pervading malady of society. Under the pressure of an increasing economic struggle, the fact of the artist's existence, or the possibility that any artist may continue to struggle through early manhood or make any part of his message heard, becomes less and less likely to occur. As one grows older, one may perhaps become reconciled somewhat to this state of things; and perhaps it is as well that the world has so few artists, since the world does not, generally speaking, deserve any. But there is still no excuse for declaring the artist to be hard-hearted. On the contrary, in so far as any man is capable of experiencing and loving life, and of sympathizing with experiences to the point of imaginative re-creation, he is, in that respect, an artist himself. Such a man must assuredly be tender-hearted. The desire to avoid life, the desire to hold aloof in sympathy from human wrongs and miseries, if it exists at all among artists, is purely a product of our latter days. The modern artist has, indeed, been so successfully hounded out of existence by economic competition, that he is almost always obliged to take to some "ivory tower" of contemplation, or to herd himself with his fellows into some clique, group, or school, in order to afford to himself some measure of protection. That this process makes for the fineness of the product can neither be maintained nor proven.

It would be more just, therefore, to say of the modern artist that he, like the rest of us, is only a victim of his circumstances. He must acquire the conscience of a Tamerlane in order to beat Tamerlane. This process inevitably leads to a coarsening of the quality of his product so that it becomes, at best, a compromise with the public taste, or a violently savage protest against his conditions of living. If the artist shrinks from turning the beautiful into the obvious, or from using his talents for purely propagandist aims, he is faced with the dilemma of creating an aesthetic beauty out of subject-matter that is necessarily frail and limited. In neither way that he chooses, can his conscience entirely absolve itself from the humiliating sense of failure; whereas the greatest artists not only know that they have succeeded, but also wherein they have succeeded. To alter the position in which the artist of to-day finds himself, demands either a system of free endowment, to which our present system of society is even less likely to-day to give assent than it has been in isolated cases in the past; or else a complete transformation of society from a state of industrial competition to a state of common co-operation. In other words, "Utopia or death"

is more than ever before in the history of this world, the only prospect for the artist.
JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

CHEKHOV'S NOTEBOOK.

N., a teacher, on her way home in the evening was told by her friend that X. had fallen in love with her, N., and wanted to propose. N., ungainly, who had never before thought of marriage, when she got home, sat for a long time trembling with fear, could not sleep, cried. and towards morning fell in love with X.; next day she heard that the whole thing was a supposition on the part of her friend and that N. was going to marry not her but Y. "O MY dear little pimple!" said the bride tenderly. The bridegroom thought for a \hile, then felt hurt—they parted.

Hi: had a liaison with a woman of forty-five after which he began to write ghost stories.

K. keeps a library, but he is always away visiting; there are no readers.

AN old man of eighty says to another old man of sixty: "You ought to be ashamed, young man."

WHEN they sang in church "Now is the beginning of our salvation," he ate glarizna at home; on the day of St. John the Baptist he ate no food that was circular and flogged his children. [Glavisria in Russian is t-he name of a fish and also means beginning; the root of the verbs "to behead" and "to flog" are the same]

A JOURNALIST wrote lies in the newspaper, but he thought he was writing the truth.

IF you are afraid of loneliness, do not marry.

HE himself is rich, but his mother is in the \orkhouse.

HE married, furnished a house, bought a writing-table, got everything in order, but found he had nothing to write.

FAUSTZ What you don't know is just what you want'; what you know is what you can't use.

Acrnouch you may tell lies, people will believe you, if only you speak with authority.

As I shall lie in the grave alone, so in fact I live alone.

AN actress who spoilt all her parts by very bad acting—and this continued all her life long until she died. Nobody liked her: she ruined all the best parts; and yet she went on acting until she was seventy.

HE alone is all right and can repent who feels himself to be wrong.

THE archdeacon curses the "(loubt'ers," and they stand in the choir and sing anathema to themselves. HE imagined that his wife lay with her legs cut off and that he nursed her in order to save his soul... (Skitaliez).

THE black-beetles have left the house; the house will be burnt down.

"DMITRI, the Pretender, and Actors." "Turgenev and the Tigers." Articles like that can be, and are, written. OUR self-esteem and conceit a're European. but our culture and actions are Asiatic. SHE is wicked, but she taught her children goodness.

EVERY one has something to hide.

ON the lips of the old I hear either stupidity or malice.

"MAMMA, Pete did not say his prayers." Pete is awakened, he says his prayers, cries, then lies down and shakes his fist at the child who made the complaint. ONE became a priest, the other a dukhobor, the third a philosopher, and in each case instinctively because no one wants really to work with bent back from morning to night.

To Doctor N., an illegitimate child, who has never lived with his father and knew him very little, his bosom friend Z. says with agitation: "You see, the fact of the matter is that your father misses you very much, he is ill and wants to have a look at you." The father keeps furnished apartments. He fakes the fried fish out of the dish with his hands and only afterwards uses a fork. The vodka smells rank. N. went to see him, had dinner—his only feeling being that -that fat peasant, with the grizzled beard, should sell such filth. But once, when passing the house at midnight, he looked in at the window: his father was sitting with bent back reading a book. He recognized himself and his own manners.

A SPARKLING, joyous nature, a kind of living protest imagine the absolute chaos Germany would have been against grumblers; he is fat and healthy, eats a great deal, every one likes him but only because of being afraid of the grumblers; he is a nobody, a Ham, only eats and laughs loud, and that 's all; when he dies, every one sees that he had done nothing, that he had been mistaken for some one else.

AFTER the inspection of the building, the Commission, which was bribed, lunched heartily, and it was precisely

a funeral feast over honesty.

At three o'clock in the morning they wake him: he has to go to his job at the railway-station, and so every day for the last fourteen years.

A LADY grumbles: "I write to my son that he should change his linen every Saturday. He replies: Why Saturday, not Monday? I answer: Well, all right, let it be Monday. And he: Why Monday, not Tuesday? He is a nice honest man, but I get worried by him."
(To be continued.)

LETTERS FROM A DISTANCE: X.

MY TENT, South Africa. March, 1921.

THE other night, my dear Eusebius, in the kraal a quarter of a mile away there was a dance, and for hours on end the valley throbbed with the rhythm of tom-toms and the terribly exciting chant, tenor solo, bass chorus, syncopated by the squeals of the women, to which the stamping figures moved. I can sleep through the most violent thunderstorm, but I could not sleep through the after effects of the social eruption down below. It had filled the air with disturbance and my mind with a violent commotion through which it was difficult to determine how much I was the victim of hallucination in the extraordinary pressure which I felt surrounding my tent. It was certainly an illusion that black figures were prowling round my tent, but illusions do not grow out of nowhere and the emanation from the excitement of the dance was real enough, and real too was its inability to enter my tent or to subdue the response in me of trained and civilized instincts alarmed and on their guard against such savage debauchery. The mind must create images even when they are not wanted, and so I lay with a haunting sense of black figures prowling around me, while my nerves swung to and fro on the rhythm of the dance, recognizing the rhythm and its terrible potency. I resisted it with all my might, and found relief in understanding why white people, who have no skill in diagnosing their sensations and must regard the rhythm of the black man's untutored and unharnessed energy as hostile and dangerous, are flung into a panic loathing whenever they find themselves within reach of it. It is an immensely powerful thing, this rhythm: ragtime and jazz are a feeble dilution of it, a vulgarization, for it is not at all vulgar. It is terrible and gross, but it has a furious warmth, which, if resisted, might easily become a

ferocious heat, and, I suppose, on occasion has done so. It is a fundamental thing, and I find myself held by it and by my own need of understanding it, not as a mere literary person but as a man who has found civilization become wellnigh intolerable through excessive rejection: the British habit of regarding everything that is not British as sub-human and therefore to be exterminated if possible, and if not, then to be enslaved.

Now this savage rhythm which has so disturbed my peace and my thoughts is certainly not a slavish thing. It is heroic in its abandonment, though the courage of it may be far from conscious. Civilized dread of it may be dread of unharnessed force, and recognition of inability to harness it without taking pains to understand it. It is a challenge certainly. It is the reason why the black men return to their kraals, because there they can share in the rhythm of their races: just as white men huddle in the towns because there they can share in the rhythm of machines, the substitutes at which they have arrived after long over-civilization. So far, the answer of civilization to the challenge of the black man's rhythm has been Christianity and commerce, and it has not been an effective answer: for the challenge remains and produces disastrous results wherever the white man and the black live side by side, as here and in America. Listening to the rhythm of the dance the other night I could only describe it, for the purposes of the moment, as solidarity carried to a white heat. For what purpose? That is where the white man goes wrong. He wants everything, even and especially civilization, to have a purpose.

This black solidarity is solidarity for its own sake. The kraal makes sure of it every now and then with music and dancing and drinking, and life goes on as before. Rather than break their solidarity—which is all the truth they know, and all they need to know—the black men take no step towards what we white men accept as progress, and remain living among wild beasts, poisonous serpents and even more poisonous insects, and they may be right. Once that solidarity is broken there enters into life every conceivable and every inconceivable kind of crazy egoism, every kind of ingenious elaboration of the method of the headman and the witch-doctor, all pretending to be “civilized” and all impeding the only progress, that which is gradually made towards a solidarity which does not block discovery and is intensified by it, a solidarity which is to that of the kraal as steel is to iron ore. Carl Sandburg in his poem “Smoke and Steel” is on the right track, but he is alone among modern poets in being so. Those who indulge in the ancient habit of civilized man of self-congratulation on escaping from

tribal unity are not only in error, but generations behind the consciousness of their fellows which has long been aware that escape is not enough, that the emotions of it flow into channels of superstition far more dangerous than those of the bondage of ignorance, and that civilization unlike solidarity is not an end in itself.

But what is solidarity? I should define it as a complete and agreed faith in the rhythm of humanity. Savages have it, and with it a deep assurance that the rhythm of humanity is woven in with that of the universe. Civilized men are at present united in their response to the rhythm of machines, which cuts across the rhythm of humanity and exasperates and disharmonizes the various racial rhythms, producing a discord which artists like Stravinsky and Scriabin endeavour to compose into music. They would do better if, having made sure, as they are at tempting to do, of the machine-rhythm, they would then expose themselves to the kraal-rhythm. The result would be vital. a musical Einstein, a perception of truth stated in terms intelligible to every one who is sufficiently alive to care, even casually, for truth, and bound in due course to dominate the many to whom truth is a matter of no concern whatever, which, as I see it—and I am wandering about the world entirely in the hope of seeing clearly—is the central task that lies before the next two or three generations.

It is the tragedy of the human race, that, being pledged to the quest of solidarity, pledged by its own destruction of primitive solidarity as inadequate, it has forgotten the much that it once knew about it, and in its despair dotes on the manufactured solidarity of armies which leads only to a ruinous waste and to a kind of imbecility of which the savage is incapable. I think the honour of solving the problem will go to the musicians, because there is the technique which is least impaired by the general collapse of the civilized structure. Poetry, painting and literature will be too much concerned for a long time to come with their own private technical problems to be capable of service in this affair, which is everybody's business, yours, Eusebius, and mine, and my present black neighbours' and my civilized friends' in New York and London who will have it that the getting of money from the Germans is important, or that nothing matters so much as subduing the bolshevik menace, which might have actually existed if the Russian leaders had gone to their own peasants for inspiration. But they wanted to be in the fashion and went to economic theory instead, with the result that they have produced nothing but a perfectly helpless cerebral hysteria, and are not a menace to anything but themselves and perhaps to the various

Belgiums which the not much more intelligent Allies have created on their frontiers. O dear—these soldiers! They must always be looking for a menace, and if they can not find one, they make one. I_ can well imagine some of my military friends, if their night's rest had been disturbed by my black friends down yonder. hauling out' a gun or two and blowing them into smithereens, and finding excuse for it after they had done so.

It is much better to try to think it out, even if doing so necessitates being alone, as I am now, in Central Africa, which, so far from being a dark continent, is brilliantly illuminated by the sun, and so far from being a desert' is, at present, wetter -than any country I have known, even Scotland, and must surely be one of the finest grazing countries in the world. It is surely a fine place in which to graze in the fields of thought; and whether mankind has progressed or not, it is certainly something that a few weeks' journey should bring a puzzled mind out of the jangle of meaningless facts which make up the hubbub of the great markets to a peace where facts are few and simple and significant.

As though in ironic comment on my preoccupation with the kraal—how deliciously ironic life always is, and how stodgy it would be without its irony !—a white man called on me yesterday: a shaggy, hairy and rather flea-bitten white man.

"Good evening," said he.

"Good evening," said I.

"Going up country?"

"Maybe, maybe not. I may go back to Europe or America, or on to the East."

He looked blank. "I know the country like I know my own backside; and a backside of a country it is too."

"That," said I, "may be the point of it."

"Point be d—d!" he cried. "I 'eard O' you down the valley. Bit of a writer, ain't you?"

I_ nodded.

"One o' them 'ard wri-ters wot you can't 'ardly read?"

I acquiesced.

"Huh!" he said. "Religious! . . . I thought you might want some one as knew the country to put you up to a thing or two. Tain't a white man's country. Everything goes to 'ell in it. If it ain't ticks, it's flies; and if it ain't flies, it's leopards; and if it ain't leopards, it's these 'ere black b-irs. That's all there is to say about Sou Thafrica."

"Thank you," I said.

He looked round my tent. " 'Ad fever yet?"

KING."

"You'll get it. Go to bed with a bottle of whisky."

I could not take the hint, but I produced sherry which he emptied unwillingly as a substitute.

"You don't want me to go along wi' you? I can put my 'and on the best lands, and I can take you where there's gold and mica and asbestos, and di'monds too—not that di'monds is any good."

"No, I'm not looking for anything."

"Just 'ere for your 'ealth, eh? I can take you where the ground is black with game, black with it."

"No, thanks, I don't shoot."

"Aw right," he said gloomily, taking up his hat'. "But lemme give you one tip. Don't you take up with no Dutch men. Black's all right in its place and vwhite's white, but when God made Judas he was thinking O' the Dut'ch."

I_ walked with him down the hill and he said wistfully:

"Was you ever in Birmingham?"

I said that I had lived in Birmingham for a few months.

"Know Mary Street?"

Yes, I knew Mary Street.

"I lived there," he said. "before I came out 'ere. Dear old Birmingham! Dear old Birmingham! Good night."

He slipped off into the night as though he wished to be alone with his overwhelming recollections.

I don't know why, but he seemed to me to be not only an ironic comment on my reflections, but also a pathetic foot-note to human life.

GILBERT CANNAN.

A REVIEWER' S NOTEBOOK.

IN the June number of -the Liberator Mr. Max Eastman invites other editors and friends of the magazine to discuss with him the question of joining the Clarté movement. I_t appears that' the directors of Clarté have asked the group surrounding the Liberator to unite with them as a sort of American branch of their organization, and Mr. Eastman hesitates to accept their proposal because he can not admit that literary and artistic people have any grounds for setting themselves up as leaders or that there is any real distinction between revolutionary "education" and revolutionary "propaganda." In regard to the utility of Clarté, Mr. Eastman may be right; as he says, the work of writers and artists has to be "playful" in order to be creative, it has to be "very free and irresponsible," and consequently writers and artists can not submit t'o the official control of any party (save that of the Communists themselves, of course). This may well

dispose of M. Barbusse's plan; but the terms of Mr. Eastman's rejection of it raise other questions that are not so easily disposed of. There is, if one is not mistaken, a distinction between revolutionary "education" and revolutionary "propaganda"; and as for the leadership of "literary and artistic people," one might ask with a good deal of confidence, Where would the revolutionary movement have been without it? Mr. Eastman speaks of these people as being "in need of guidance and careful watching by the practical and theoretical workers of the movement"; he evidently considers them so exceedingly "playful" that, far from being in a position to educate the rest of us, they are themselves as much in want of education as so many refractory children—which suggests the notion that the editors of the *Liberator* must have a very bad conscience.

The trouble is, I think, that Mr. Eastman sees things in a false proportion. He admits that writers and artists contribute "something indispensable to the practical movement"—he admits that much on behalf of the *Liberator*. He says that they contribute "something that we might call inspiration," that they "keep up a certain warm faith and laughing resolution in those who might weary of learning and labouring in the mere practical terms of the task." To Mr. Eastman, as we see, art is a mistress, not the "stern mistress" of whom we have heard so much, but a very beguiling and charming mistress who delights in trimming the beard and warming the slippers of a certain grim, strenuous giant whose name is Science and whose business is Revolution. He even speaks of Maxim Gorky as if he were one of these gay little handmaidens, gently chiding him for having temporarily mistaken (as one might mistake pumps for slippers) "the elementary distinction between 'Socialism Utopian and Scientific.' " One tries to imagine Maxim Gorky in this ingratiating posture, but somehow the picture refuses to take form. Gorky as a fount of "laughing resolution"? That will never do. Nor does Anatole France exactly inspire one with a "warm faith," in gratiating as he is in other respects and a true-blue militant by Mr. Eastman's own admission. Still more unhappily, neither of these authors accommodates us by feeling the need of that "guidance and careful watching by the practical and theoretical workers of the movement" which Mr. Eastman seems to feel on behalf of the writers and artists of the *Liberator*. This engagingly feminine view of literature, in short—the more we scrutinize it the more familiar it becomes, and the less it seems to fit the facts. It is familiar because it is American, all-too-American. Our writers all talk in this fashion, only for most of them the weary giant who

needs to be cheered up is not Revolutionary Science but Reactionary Business. And it fails to fit—the facts be cause—well, because the facts are all on the other side of the Atlantic. If, in this country, we had had any experience either of literature or of revolution, Mr. Eastman would have been led to conceive of their relationship, I think, in a rather more realistic manner. LET me ask one question: what is the great difference between the workers' movement in America and the workers' movement in Europe? What, supremely, do the American workers lack that the European workers have? The answer seems to me obvious enough: a sustained interest in their own welfare as sentient beings, a sustained conviction in regard to life, a sustained vision of some better order of things—in a word, desire, enlightened desire. It is these qualities which, embodied only more consciously in a competent' organized minority of leaders, give to a movement solidity, reality, momentum, raise it above the level of mere sporadic exasperated protest, and enable it to turn a revolution (when it comes) into something else than a catastrophe, to guide it, to handle it, to hold it, to keep it', and to make it really count and serve, instead of letting it slip away in oceans of senseless bloodshed—as, just because of this moral infantility of ours, any conceivable American revolution would be certain to do. Vision, conviction, desire, I say, form the backbone of the proletarian movement in Europe (which differs from ours in having bones), and it owes this vision, this conviction, this desire——to what? t'o whom? To Science? Or to those few men who have been more than men and who have been capable of realizing in themselves and expressing in their works heights and depths of which the rest of humanity, but for them, would never have dreamed? What, have writers accomplished all that? No, not writers alone. Founders of religions have helped, philosophers, all sorts of people. But writers have had a great deal to do with it, as one could prove in the course of a hundred pages or so. One can safely say, for the present, that the difference between the workers' movement' in Europe and the workers' movement in America—a difference that has certainly struck- Mr. Eastman—is due, more than to any other cause, to the possession, in the one case, and the lack in the other, of a really adequate literature.

Rzonn Russia, for example—since Mr. Eastman's eyes are fixed on Russia. To what is to be ascribed the partial success of the Russian revolution? Science, first of all? But other countries, Germany, for instance, are far more “scientific” than Russia. The secret lies in the Russian people—or the Russian intellectuals, if you will—in their feelings and desires; and the secret of their

feelings and desires lies in those who, sharing them, have worked upon them, intensified them, endowed them with motives, objects, purposes, wills. When one has the will one gets the "science" quickly enough; and if Russia has had the will, who is to be thanked for it if not Pushkin, who taught Russia t'o believe in itself, and Tolstoy, who taught it not to believe in property, and Dostoievsky, who taught it to believe that its destiny is to reconcile the nations, and Chekhov, who taught it to look upon its actual existence as empty and intolerable, and Gorky, who, in spite of that little error about the two varieties of socialism, taught it to recognize in the most degraded soul a man and a kinsman? There one has the component parts of the Russian revolutionary spirit; for generations these writers have been of the very blood and sinew of the students and workers who have helped to carry that spirit to fruition. "Desire precedes function," and it precedes the statesmen, the economists and the scientists. If Pushkin had never existed it is absolutely certain that Lenin would never have existed either.

THE point requires no arguing. Whoever has sat for ten minutes in a meeting of English workers knows very well that behind the corporate consciousness of British labour stand Webb and Shaw, Morris and Ruskin, Huxley and Carlyle, Cobbett and Shelley. That a man is a man and not an animal, that as a man he has dignity, that having dignity he has claims, that having claims he has intentions, that having intentions he means to get a decent world about him—these are a few of the discoveries of those playful beings who, in Mr. Eastman's opinion, need to be guided and carefully watched, and the curious point is that they have to go out of bounds in order to make their discoveries. "We have," says Mr. Eastman, "not only to cultivate the poetry, but to keep the poetry true to the science of the revolution--to give life and laughter and passion and adventures in speculation, without ever clouding or ignoring any point that is vital in the theory and practice of communism." Ali, if they had been as circumspect as all that I am afraid these poets would have succeeded only in being "playful," as Mr. Eastman says the writers and artists of the *Liberator* are. There is Ibsen, for example; he was shockingly careless about communism; and yet without that terrible eye of Ibsen's no one would ever have dreamed how rotten Scandinavia was and how desperately in need of every sort of renovation. There is Morris; if he had ever grasped the "elementary distinction between 'Socialism, Utopian and Scientific,'" he would have given one doleful cry and vanished without leaving a trace of that gorgeous dream of the future from which English socialists have drawn a good half of their hope and their faith.

There is Nietzsche, who despised socialism, and who has added a cubit to the stature of every socialist. Worst of all, there are Maxim Gorky and Anatole France themselves! "True to the science of the revolution"? "Monsieur Bergeret"? "Jerome Coignard"? "The Spy"? "The Mother"? Let us draw the veil of charity over this word Science. And let' us, O let us, refrain from treating the poets as Mrs. Caudle treated her husband.

We are in a position to see now, I think, that Mr. Eastman is mistaken when he says that there is no distinction between revolutionary "education" and revolutionary "propaganda" and that literary and artistic people have no grounds for setting themselves up as leaders. Mr. Eastman accepts the facts as they are in America—where the less said about literary and artistic people the better, and where "education" scarcely exists, either as distinguished from anything else or even in itself—and erects them unto a law, whereas, in order to accord with the true law, it is the facts themselves that ought to be changed. It is because it has no education, as distinguished from propaganda which gives it merely the emotion of revolution, that the proletarian movement in this country is so astonishingly futile; and it is because the writers and artists of America are so "playful," and so afraid of all the watchful giants, that this movement has no education. In vain does the Appeal to Reason advertise in the back of the Liberator itself (at the most fetching of prices) all those good old musty, time honoured radical classics, Ingersoll's "Lecture on Shakespeare," Kropotkin's Appeal, "The Dream of John Ball," Zola's "Attack on the Mill." Well, not quite in vain; the moths have long been at them, but there is life in these ancient relics yet. But what a dim life, what a remote life, what a quaint life, 'how fantastically unrelated to the America of the year 1921! Does radical America still feed on the husks of Wendell Phillips and Brann the Iconoclast; and on the mere spectacle of Soviet Russia; and on air and emotion? That accounts for its curiously unsubstantial aspect. It has plenty of science, heaven knows; one can obtain science by the cartload from any of a dozen bureaux and institutes of research. What radical America needs is the impulse to use it, the sense of what to use it for—the vision, the conviction, the desire. And it will never get this vision, conviction, desire till writers and artists have re-thought the old thoughts, and re-lived the old experiences, and presented to the workers of America, in terms of their own understanding, in terms of the American present and future, images of a greater, a freer, a more beautiful life than they are capable themselves of associating with reality. Can that be accomplished by "playfulness," playfulness tinged with fear?

Or by anything less than absolute freedom, and tons and tons of pressure?

The truth is, it seems to me, that there is no evasion of reality to compare, on the part of an American writer, with that of talking revolution as if America had had its education and its art and literature. A revolution we may indeed have in this country within two or three generations; but those who most desire the results of revolution ought to be the most eager not to bring it on till there is some chance of consolidating those results, as there can not be while the workers themselves have no plans that reach beyond the ends of their noses. The real task, therefore, even of those writers and artists, especially of those, who have the cause of revolution most at heart, is not to fan the emotions of any portion of this already pathetically over-emotionalized population of ours, but rather to become writers and artists without regard to propaganda at all. To achieve new and more difficult attitudes, to open up new paths, to state new values in familiar terms, to scarify American life as it is, to conceive it imaginatively as it ought to be—all that is to bring the blood back in-to the American mind, to create a consciousness in which the very word “movement” has once more (what it lacks now) a resiliency, a significance, a throbbing human content. It is all very well to say that, for the purposes of revolution, workers have to be workers before they are men. That idea emanates from a civilization in which workers are so conscious of themselves as men that in acting as workers they are acting in the name of humanity. We have to do with a population which is on all its levels so unconscious as to behave almost as if it were automatic. Nothing but art and literature can arouse it, and nothing but will can arouse art and literature. And as for will, “playfulness” may be a condition of it, but only as adolescence is a condition of maturity.

The Reviewer recommends the following recent books to the notice of readers of the Freeman:

"A Son of the Hidalgos," by Ricardo León.

New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.

"The Idea of Coventry Patmore," by Osbert Burdett.

York: Oxford University Press.

"Legends," by Amy Lowell. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

6 July, 1921] THE FREEMAN

**LETTERS FROM ABROAD.
WITH THE RUSSIAN EMIGRES IN ROME.**

Rome. 10 May, 1921.

SIRs: Of all the paths which proverbially lead to Rome. none has been as well trodden in the last four years as those that have their beginning in Russia. From the day the Tsar fell, short cuts by land and sea and circuitous roads across a hemisphere have run from Odessa and Petrograd, from Omsk and Vladivostok. t'o meet finally in the Italian capital.

About two thousand Russian émigrés are now concentrated in this city. Every hotel and pensione has its quota. They range from the acclimatized Italian-speaking Tsarists who fled from—and with—Kerensky to the neophyte contingent of Wrangel protégés. Some are idlers, others scramble for the crumbs. They war among themselves—about' foreign intervention, anti-Semitism, the future of their country, the comparative deadness of the Tsar's Government and Professor Miliukov's, the relative stupidity of Generals Denikin, Judenitch and Wrangel. They congregate in the Russian Club off the Corso and in the diminutive Russian bar on the Via delle Vite: these officers without soldiers, these scions of noble families hob-nobbing with ex-Cossacks of the Caucasian hills, these petty bourgeois who have lost everything but their pettiness, and great lawyers of an expropriated law system, jobless diplomats, youths who are studying in the universities and technical schools of Rome.

All these people are waiting, waiting, waiting—have been waiting for years now—for the collapse of the Bolshevik regime.

The bar of the Via delle Vite attracts a large Italian trade, as well as Russian; so large indeed that the management is planning to transfer to more commodious quarters. Slick Italian officers, heavy Roman tradespeople and not a few women come early to the place, hoping to capture some coign of vantage whence they can observe the loud-voiced, tchai-drinking foreigners and listen to their -throaty talk. These Italians like to have their wine served to them by the slender young lady with the black hair coiled across her forehead and a sad, bored smile on her delicate face, for she is a Princess of the blood and it is not always that a fat winebibber can summon a princess by clinking his bottle; and they like to watch some bewhiskered new-comer kiss the hand of the titled wait

ress with elaborate politeness before ordering a cup of tea and some piroshki.

There is something of a Bohemian air about the place. Towards the rear of the cramped room there is a counter piled high with sandwiches, cheeses, 'uairushki—a conglomeration of Italian and Russian fare——dominated by a samovar. The walls are placarded with weird caricatures of celebrities of the Russian colony, some of whom are generally present. About ten o'clock in the evening the place becomes overcrowded, several voluble arguments are in progress, an odour of wine and smoke pervades the room, the hubbub is punctuated with shrill laughter, swirls of Russian syllables and crescendos of Italian.

My companion on the occasion of a recent visit was one of the best type of Russian refugee and, happily, by no means an uncommon type. He loves Russia more than he hates Bolshevism. He wants his country to work out her problems without the self-seeking intervention of other nations, a process which he is convinced would lead to the establishment of a social-democratic regime. But whatever the outcome may be, he is determined to go back to serve his people, and to that end he is studying a branch of technical science.

"One hope burns in all these breasts," he said to me with a glance around the crowded room, "the hope for the return of the good old days of subsidized leisure. Over there, for example, is Madame P., at various times the wife of a rich merchant, of a landowner and of a noble. She was forced to flee from Russia leaving behind her the combined inheritances of all her three husbands. She is now giving French lessons and worries over each lira. The Russian problem has no difficulties for her. She can prescribe a programme for the reorganization of the country at a moment's notice. Over there is G. the fellow in the greasy coat who's arguing with his son—he was glad to escape with his life even if he did leave a large department 'store behind him in Odessa." "What do all these people live on?"

"Oh, well, a good many of them saved something despite the hurry of their departure. Others had money invested in foreign securities. Some of the nobles and the richest of the bourgeoisie managed to carry away their diamonds' and jewellery. Of course a good many are professional men who are working for a living in Italy, and others are tradesmen who are continuing their business here. M., for example, had a fine piece of luck. He is a wool-merchant and when the second revolution came he had several shiploads of wool on the

high seas. He immediately ordered them to land the stuff in neutral ports and with the proceeds of the sales he has built up a big business again in London."

My friend interrupted me in my talk. "Sh-sh, not so loud!" he warned. "The Tsarist training of some of these fellows has stood them in good stead. They're in close touch with the Italian police and are hand and glove with some of the fascisti. They're as like as not to report anyone they suspect."

The fear of Bolshevik agents is in the heart of all these émigrés. Any expression of broad-mindedness, if too loosely worded, makes them suspicious. I know a rabid Menshevik who spends his leisure moments devising appropriate forms of expiation for Lenin and Trotzky, who because of his somewhat equivocal attitude during a discussion in the Club laid himself open to the charge of Bolshevism. He has been made miserable by the openly expressed distrust of his fellow-members and is half expecting an official investigation of the contents of his room at his hotel.

But there are moments when some of the younger men throw caution to the winds in expressing their hearty dislike of the old-line Tsarist. I remember an incident on the occasion of my first visit to the Club, slight in itself, yet symbolic. There had been a programme of music and declamation, after which the crowd departed and only a select few remained. The talk was about the Lenin-Trotzky Government. There seemed to be a unanimity of opinion on the subject. Presently one of the party rose to his feet and dramatically called upon all the company to stand and sing a hymn to the murdered Tsar. I watched the young men at my table, who had been expressing liberal views a moment ago. They kept to their seats, silent, while the rest chanted the song. "It's one thing to oppose the Bolsheviks," said one of them to me, "and quite another to mourn a dead autocracy."

The club-rooms are none too elegant. It is a high ceilinged old place, a little musty, with its dirty painted walls hung at intervals with photographs of Russian literary men—though I searched in vain for Gorky's picture. To one side of the crowded ante-rooms is the library, containing a random collection of old French and Russian books, and a long table littered with journals emanating from various counter-revolutionary groups. In theory any Russian refugee is eligible to membership, but actually a man definitely known to be a socialist, even of the palest hue, is blackballed. The other evening I was present at a stormy session.

M., a lawyer of some note, was announced to speak. He is strongly opposed to communism and the Bolshevik Government, but he believes that the overthrow of the old dynasty marks a new epoch in the history of Russia. He began his address by a reference to this fundamental tenet. That was enough for the hidebound Tsarists. They would not let him proceed. "Revolution!" they shouted. "There has been no revolution. It's only a Jewish plot you're defending. Jew! Jew!" The orator gave up. He stepped off the platform with tears running down his cheeks, but the shouting continued. The choicest curses were hurled upon the Jews. One of the women, a Jewess herself, rose to protest. "Our fault," she cried hysterically, "our fault you say, when it was the Bolsheviks who killed my brother."

But for all these differences the Russian colony is at heart in deep accord. In their elegant flats and in their dirty bed-rooms, some with resignation, others wild with impatience, all, all are waiting, waiting, waiting, for the collapse of the Bolshevik regime. I am, etc.,

Rome, Italy

EUGENE LYONS

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

IN DEFENCE OF MR. D. H. LAWRENCE.

Sms: In a criticism entitled, "The Quality of Mr. D. H. Lawrence," which appeared in your issue of 22 June, the following passages descriptive of Italian life are cited from "The Lost Girl" as indicating in Mr. Lawrence a character smug and insular: "the lousy dressed-up dolls . . . the blood-streaked Christ on the Crucifix . . ." and again, "their vindictive mountain-morality, and rather horrible religion."

This book is written from the viewpoint of its central character, Alvina, and, like a true artist, nowhere does Mr. Lawrence make clear what are his own convictions. However, it is a ten-to-one wager that he was right in attributing such a reaction to the mind of a middle-class Englishwoman, regardless of how liberal she might be in her attitude towards what she had been taught to consider as moral restrictions. Since Alvina is represented as devoting considerable time to de-lousing the Italian home in which she found herself living, her feeling for the Italian churches may convict her of having a prejudice against lice but not of being inconsistent. I am, etc.,

Brooklyn, New York.

L. B. N. GNAEDINGER.

THE ORIGIN OF THE SLUM.

SIRS: Dr. David Starr Jordan in his letter in the Freeman of 25 May, left himself wide open in one respect which your correspondents Mr. John W. Maskell, and B. H. R., have apparently overlooked. That is in his emphasis on heredity, considered as a germinal, and consequently uncontrollable factor in human behaviour. Dr. Jordan writes of "the residue helpless and hopeless from heredity," of "hereditary incapacity," and finally, "Real men must inherit manhood." This is a point of some importance, because if inherently some people are bound to become slum-dwellers or criminals, and we want to get rid of them, the only thing to do is to kill them, as B. H. R. suggests, or at least to segregate them, a task which presents some slight difficulties. If the situation is as Dr. Jordan presents it, we had better follow Mr. H. L. Mencken. and, laughing sourly at the rabble and those who ride on its backs, concern ourselves with books, thought, and love—with colour, art and criticism.

For myself. I am not highly optimistic about social reconstruction. but I do not see why anyone should be discouraged by such a gaseous bogey as heredity in human behaviour, which, at most, constitutes an open question in psycho-genetics. Let us listen to a few specialists in the field. Dr. Stuart Paton, in a recent work on "Human Behaviour," says, "There is a prevailing tendency to speak of the inheritance of definite traits which finds little justification in fact. This is true both in regard to pathological qualities and in the case of the marks of genius." Dr. Edward J. Kempf, in his extremely important book on "Psychopathology," writes: "The fact that psychopathic personalities are to be found among the ancestors of a psychopath has been the flimsy ground upon which the dogmatic thinkers in psychiatry have made the assumption of 'defective heredity,' 'hereditary taint,' 'constitutional inferiority.' etc. This assumption, upon mature consideration, is nothing less than amazing, and could hardly have been wilder or more unproductive."

If Dr. Kempf, after years of work among the most sadly maladjusted specimens of humanity to be found on the earth, feels that way about it, we may reasonably look with the same attitude at such comparative supermen as the average inhabitants of the slums. The view that considerable numbers of people are barred by their original nature from becoming civilized human beings, positively asserted in the present state of our information on the subject, seems to me on an intellectual level with the efforts of the militarists to adapt certain biological doctrines to their own purposes. however different Dr. Jordan's sentiments and motives assuredly are from those of

militarism. I am, etc.,
New York City. CARL Dunne.

(SLUMMING – ED)

SIRS! Some years ago, deceived by appearances, I thought with Dr. David Starr Jordan that "the city slums constitute the hopper into which the incompetent, the dissipated and the unfortunate fall." I have now abandoned this theory, because in practice it is unsatisfactory.

The proportion of incompetent, dissipated and unfortunate is very large among the well-to-do, and I do not see them falling into the hopper of the slums to any appreciable extent. Frequently I see them advancing into great material prosperity, even to the occupation of responsible places in business and the government of nations. Conversely I see (and the process is very noticeable at the moment) thousands and thousands of competent, temperate and virtuous citizens steadily gravitating into the aforesaid hopper of the slums to become (it is admitted) in many cases incompetent, dissipated and unfortunate in course of time.

While heredity accounts for such differences as exist between a man and a horse, and the variations that we observe in individuals even of the same family, it does not account for acquired habits. The equation of heredity for the people in the slums, and for the people in the "West End" is to all intents and purposes the same. The base of a man's ancestry in a country like England, may be said to extend over the whole population of a few centuries ago. Evolution in heredity is a very slow process, and we must look to something else for an explanation of the slums.

I recommend the biologist, who looks at the slums and who regards the courts of royalty, for the matter of that, to compare the antics and habits of both classes of denizens with the unnatural behaviour of the lower animals which are kept in captivity. Mankind may be said to be in intellectual captivity, that is to say, we are in the toils of superstition. We have turned the wide earth into a prison house because we buy and sell it to each other. It is for this reason, just as happened in the past when we used to buy and sell each other, that we have a desolated country-side on the one hand, and city slums on the other.

Dr. Jordan's London friend who said that if the people of the East End had any life in them, they would come around some night and cut our throats, must have forgotten that they have now and then done so in the past, and may very well do so again some day. Why do we keep large civil and military forces handy but to preserve us precariously from this event

ality? I am, etc.,
Surbiton, Surrey, England.
JOAN E. GRANT.

THE FAILURE OF NEW YORK'S DRAMATIC CRITICS.

Slks: Is it not wellnigh calamitous that a city boasting more than fifty first-class theatres and countless periodical publications should have so little genuine dramatic criticism? We see a few clever writers whose chief aim is to "score off" the performance and thus establish an impression of their own superiority to the subject in hand, and these are followed by a number of inferior imitators and mere unidea'd space-fillers, but almost no one is really trying to apply constructive principles for the improvement of the drama or to employ rational intelligence for the information and guidance of the public. If the "critic" can so exploit his own clevemess at the expense of author and actors that he rivals the "colyum" paragrapher in making the unskilful laugh, he seems to consider his work well done. Personal lampoon, libel, vaudeville "gags," puns, double cntenles, distorted synopsis, irrelevant anecdote, private prejudice—anything and everything may be expected in a so-called critical review, except genuine dramatic criticism. One looks in vain for evidence of the enlightened judgment, reasoned interpretation, sound technical knowledge, and helpful appreciation which Mr. Montague of the Manchester Guardian and Mr. Walkley, of the London Times, for instance, have habitually given to their constituencies. One has only to imagine what our current theatrical notices would look' like five years hence, if any publisher could be found mad enough to bind up some of them in book form! The New York dramatic reviewer's mainstay usually is exaggerated'denunciation, exaggerated applause or mere pettiness, insuficient unto the day and meaningless the day after.

As a concrete illustration of the deplorable conditions that have occasioned these troubled musings, I would ask you to consider the typical case of Mr. Alexander Woollcott, dramatic critic of the New York Tl'me.r. This estimable journal enjoys an enviable prestige, and Mr. Woollcott's influence has therefore to be reckoned with and his representative standing can not be denied. His practice may be profitably examined in his handling of three important premieres which occurred recently on successive nights in a single week.

In reviewing "Clair de Lune" Mr. Woollcott's obvious purpose was to depreciate Michael Strange by exalting Victor Hugo, and damn the play for its morbid vice by praising the novel for its wholesome virtue. "It is," said Mr. \Vooll

cott, "a shaky, discoloured, and miscellaneous structure reared dizzily on the fine, firm foundation of Hugo's 'L'Homme qui Rit.' . . . The high peak of the play is a scaly and scabrous love duet written and acted for the titillation of the over civilized." Without pausing to admire Mr. Woolcott's virtuous horror over symptoms of decadence much milder than many with which successful modern fiction, verse and drama have familiarized us, I wish only to point out that it is Victor Hugo and not Michael Strange whom he is condemning: for if anyone will glance through the novel again (a precaution which Mr. Woolcott either neglected or else too trustingly assumed that no one else would take) he will find that Hugo gives a whole book to this particular "episode," in a crucially emphatic position quite comparable in importance with Michael Strange's second act, and that any possibly objectionable feature in the play has been directly translated from the novel with considerable expurgation and of course suitable dramatization. The drama's fidelity to the novel is amusingly shown in a line which the erudite reviewer twice singles out for special reprobation. "What chiefly characterizes Michael Strange as a playwright is a certain gloating magniloquence of language, a resolutely poetic speech. [This is, of course, precisely true of Hugo and absolutely appropriate to the historical period and milieu of the play's action.] . . . There is a tendency to run on about black barges on scarlet seas, or some such falderal." Compare the blameless Victor Hugo: "Oh! j'voudrais Eire le soir (11/EC toi, pendant qu'on ferait de la musique, tons deux adossés au même coussin, sous le tendelet de fleurirre n'une galère d'Or, au milieu de: douleurs infinies de la mer." VIf seem to have here, then, a case in which a prominent reviewer, in the first place, either did not know what he was talking about or else deliberately misrepresented essential facts; and, in the second place, ignored the true dramatic skill shown in rearing a unified action with many fine stage effects upon the straggling, infirm foundation of a three-volume sensationally "romantic" novel—all in order to be witty and superior at the expense of the playwright since he did not dare to poke much fun at such popular favourites as the Barrymores. This kind of thing, I submit, is not worthy of the name of dramatic criticism.

Again, Mr. Walter Hampden's first performance of "Macbeth" received equally bad treatment. Mr. Woolcott's fundamental mistake here lay in confusing the general production (which was simply "killed" by the interminable and wholly unnecessary waits between scenes) with Mr. Hampden's individual interpretation of his role, which was admirable; but Mr. Woolcott's unpardonable critical sin lay in his laudatory reference to the acting of Mr. Fritz Leiber, pupil and heir of Mr. Robert Mantell. Any good word for Mr. Leiber puts Mr. Woolcott on record as in favour of the Hudson River school of shoddy and rant which has done such infinite harm

in making attendance at a Shakespearean production seem a virtuous but tiresome ordeal, like going to church, instead of one of the highest intellectual and artistic delights imaginable. In the case of Molnar's "Liliom," the appeal of this presentation was so undeniable that Mr. Woolcott was hard put to it in order to find some excuse for his wonted display of superiority, but not to be beaten he singled out Miss Eva Le Gallienne's enunciation, thus: "The role calls for a peasant flavour and gets instead an actress whose playing is just a little pinched and pursed and one whose speech is incorrigibly elegant to the last . . . She so minces verbally that you half suspect her of standing in the wings and murmuring 'prunes and prisms,' " etc. Now it is absurd to attack Miss Le Gallienne's enunciation alone when every one in the cast (except The Sparrow) speaks English as well as he or she knows how; and Mr. Woolcott's strictures are moreover demonstrably indefensible on three definite counts. In the first place, Julie is different from the hundreds of "peasant" girls whom Liliom might have had for the mere taking, as Molnar is at pains to make Liliom specifically assert, first to Julie herself and later to Mrs. Muskat, and it is precisely this strange difference that wins and holds his love; in the second place, the play is translated into good modern English, not into argot or the defective dialect of the uneducated; and in the third place, the London production attempted just this kind of cockney or underbred tone—and lasted one week. If one adds to these points one's own experience of the spellbound and tear-stricken condition of the audience when Miss Le Gallienne is on the stage, one realizes acutely the injurious worthlessness of Mr. Woolcott's style of work.

If this, then, is the standard of New York's dramatic criticism, what hope is there for the American drama? Are the theatre managers really so much to blame, or so solely to blame, after all, for the kind of entertainment chiefly provided by the Broadway stage? I am, etc.,
New York City. LAWRENCE MASON

COLOURISM IN POETRY.

"Breakers and Granite." John Gould Fletcher.
New York: The Macmillan Company.

BALZAC once remarked, "Without genius I am lost." One may easily make the mistake of assuming that there could not conceivably be an artist who might not say of himself the same thing. The remark applies with particular force to that sort of artist whose work is "charged," who is at his best when his pages have "flight," whose method, in other words, is in the nature of half-deliberately guided

improvisation. It hardly applies, if it applies at all, to the calmer type, the builder-artist—Trollope, for example. Nor does it particularly apply to the mere ornamentalist, the sort of poet who learns by patience and application how to say pretty things in a pretty way, to wreathc them into pleasantly foliate patterns. Compulsion, of a psychotic nature, is in such cases at a minimum,'and the writer is free in a sense in which the other type of artist is not. We do not expect him to give us any phoenix of art, plumed with sheer brilliance, certainly, but we do not expect him, either, to fall very far below the moderately good. He is a craftsman, and his craft sustains him. More interesting by far is the sort of artist who is more creator than craftsman. Mr. John Gould Fletcher, who continues erratically to hold one of the highest places among contemporary American poets, is as striking a case of that as we could find. If we include his new book, "Breakers and Granite," Mr. Fletcher has now published ten books of verse: he is a prolific writer. To the first five of these books Mr. Fletcher now permits only a subterranean existence. They are not in circulation, and presumably he considers them mere juvenilia. There was little verse in them that could be called distinguished. It was in "Irradiations" that Mr. Fletcher first found himself—something happened t'o him, something to which perhaps he alone, if he wished, could give us the clue; something more, perhaps, than a mere exposure to the influence of pre-contemporary French poetry or the influence of Mr. Ezra Pound. A new sort of tactilism had been given to poetry by the French Symbolists, and Mr. Fletcher was among the first to take this out of the general air and make it a property of English verse. It was a sort of tactilism to which he was born, but for which, in the American literary scene, he would have starved. In Paris and London he found it' and grew upon it. "Irradiations" was the flower of it; "Goblins and Pagodas" and parts of "The Tree of Life" the fruit.

It would be an error, however, to suppose that in all this Mr. Fletcher was deliberate or orderly. He was in a sense a happy victim: a tree pollinated by a chance air. At the outset his self-discovery made him drunk, he committed excesses of colour, and these excesses—in "Irradiations," in the "Symphonies," less often in "The Tree of Life"—remain perhaps his finest achievement. These poems have, for the most part, no moral, no "meaning," no intention—they reveal no general attitude, preach no doctrine. Those who wish poetry to embody, among other things, the concise statement of a problem, or the formulation of an answer, may pillage these poems in vain. All they will get is a colour, a fragrance. For if it was to the new tactilism of Mallarmé and Laforgue and

Rimbaud and Verlaine that Mr. Fletcher so richly responded, it was to the tactilism alone: to the self-analysis, half bitter, half sentimental, with which in French poetry this tactilism was usually alloyed, he remained unresponsive. He took the colourism to which it was in his case the key, and omitted the psychology, precisely as Mr. 'I'. S. Eliot took the psychology and omitted the colourism; the former following Rimbaud and Mallarmé, the latter following Verlaine and Laforgue.

Mr. Fletcher's "genius" is therefore for colouristic vividness, primarily, and it must be remarked immediately that it is the "genius" of Balzac's comment—without it Mr. Fletcher is undone. He is at his best when his method is that of fierce improvisation. If the initial stimulus is one happily calculated to draw forth the poet's richest deposits of association, and if, moreover, those deposits have not already too often or too precisely at one point been drawn upon, then he gives us work which has the lustre of the "inspired." But one can not go on for ever being inspired—the stimulus may not be always as strong, or it may strike at exhausted rifts. Then is one fortunate if one is craftsman as well as creator, or if one knows as well how to write with one's eyes open as with one's eyes shut, and in full possession, perhaps, of a wide knowledge, a rich consciousness of experience, a myriad sympathy. But Mr. Fletcher is not, in this regard, fortunate. When improvisation fails him, he fails altogether. Many a newspaper-poet has a better "conscious" technique in verse than he; when he attempts to write in cold blood, his verse is irregular, colourless, and weak. The rhythmic and verbal richness, which is overwhelming in his best "inspired" work, at such moments escapes him wholly, and one would suppose the work to have been by a different hand. One characteristic alone remains—rhetorical speed. Great is the temptation for a poet, whom habit rather than the compulsion of a theme urges toward composition, to echo that part of his own manner which is suggestible by the word "speed." But this speed, excellent when it is the heat, the flame of the theme itself, becomes, when superimposed upon a theme, a mere trick of rhetoric—it is a simulation of excitement, irritating because we can find nothing in the theme, or rather in the poet's reaction to it, out of which the excitement might properly spring. We feel the hollowness; we feel that the poet is goading himself, that he is pretending to an intensity of feeling which he has on other occasions possessed, and would like to possess again, but to which he has lost the key.

"Breakers and Granite," like "The Tree of Life," shows Mr. Fletcher often in this predicament. There are fine

things in it—notably the experiments in “polyphonic prose,” such as “Clipper Ships,” and “The Old South.” It is well for us to be reminded that these antedated Miss Lowell’s “Can Grande’s Castle.” But the book as a whole does not satisfy. It is true that Mr. Fletcher’s attempt to summarize America, past and present, in a series of poems in verse and prose lends a solidity and a fragmentary grandeur to this book which one can not find in his others—one’s historical sense is refreshed by it, certainly; but despite one’s pleasure in this and in several poems on the Mississippi and the Mexican Quarter, and in the Lincoln poem, one comes away from the book with the feeling that Mr. Fletcher has laboured heroically at a theme not designed to do him justice. Without colour, to paraphrase Balzac, Mr. Fletcher is lost, for he has nothing, or little, to fall back upon. He has not the self-awareness of the good psychologist, his motives remain dark to him; and yet, on the other hand, he is too egocentric to observe widely the external world. One turns from “Breakers and Granite” to the poems by Mr. Fletcher in the recently published “Miscellany of American Poetry” (Harcourt, Brace and Company) with relief, for in those was not only an achievement, vivid, magical, and swift, but a promise—a hint of an earth mysticism which might conceivably prove, for Mr. Fletcher, a new well of colour.

CONRAD AIKEN.

SHORTER NOTICES.

WHEN a lady novelist turns to the theme of colonial expansion under the benign aegis of the British Empire, her critical judgments are apt to be coloured by the sweep of events and her personal impressions become mere eddies in the current. This is largely what has happened in the course of Miss Macnaughton’s “My Canadian Memories,” which starts off with the thesis that money-getting often has a “very heroic element about its attainment,” and gradually expands into a paean of praise for big business, with most of the swelling overtones of Elbert Hubbard, Dr. Crane and Mr. Bok. Miss Macnaughton holds that trading is fundamentally a development of the sporting instinct—the “ineradicable instinct of competition”—and it is but a step from this to the discovery that to call the British “a nation of shopkeepers” is at bottom a real compliment. What applies to the upbuilding of the Empire as a whole is fastened with redoubled zeal upon the industrial expansion of Canada, which occupies the major portion of Miss Macnaughton’s “Memories.” The spectre of reciprocity rouses her to a vehement chapter, which is fol

lowed by a quiet one on the Royal North-west Mounted Police, because, truly, without some reference to this theme, "a book on Canada would hardly have fulfilled its purpose." L. B. IT should be impossible nowadays to level at a reformer the reproach that before planning the future -he should master the lessons of the past, for the Webbs, the Hammonds, and the Rowntrees have so mapped the world, at least of English labour, that its detail should be as familiar to the student as the bumps in Fifth Avenue must be to a motor-omnibus driver. Here is No. 61 of the Monographs on Economics and Political Science issued by the London School of Economics, and more are announced.' 'In this case the author has attempted to single out the causes which led to the coming of machinery in industry, "which made Great Britain the workshop of the world for a large part of the nineteenth century." The present commercial depression in this country has brought home very vividly what a preponderant part transport plays in trade, and Dr. Knowles succeeds in showing that it was the development of transport that produced the British Empire, the imperialism, and the changed status of agriculture of the late nineteenth century. He bases his theme upon the assumption that that era was a product of the ideas of the French encyclopaedists and English inventors, and in recording the consequences of the advent of machinery and in studying the effects mechanical transport has had, he has produced a valuable work of reference. This will be followed, it is announced, by a second volume dealing with the evolution of France, Germany, Russia and the United States under the same influences. M. B.

"My Canadian Memories." S. Macnaughton. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company.

"The Industrial and Commercial Revolutions in Great Britain during the Nineteenth Century." L. C. A. Knowles. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. , _ _

"Labour's Magna Charta." Archibald Chisholm. New York: Longmans, Green and Co.

MR. ARCHIBALD CHISHOLM must not be thought ironical: it is not because the labour-clauses of the Versailles treaty are not likely to benefit directly, say, the coal-miners in Virginia or Northumberland, any more than the document which the barons forced from King John in 1215 helped the labourer of that day, that he has entitled his study of these clauses, "Labour's Magna Charta." Rather does he appear to be the kind of man who would not allow a good luncheon and a mellow cigar to prevent him from deploring the hardships of unemployment. "The results of the first meeting of the Assembly of the League are very gratifying," he says. "Although we find Japanese workers calling out for the eight-hour day, the Conference recognized that industrial development is too backward to allow this. . . . It surely would not be difficult to

get 'a moral equivalent' for class-war. . . . A band of extremists . . . are working for a day when an elaborate system of unions, known as National Guilds, will completely dominate industry. . . . It is true that the present system has many defects. . . . We must strengthen the moral forces in all lands; and the only enduring support of sustained moral effort is to be found in religion." Nevertheless, this "critical study of the labour-clauses of the peace treaty and of the draft conventions and recommendations of the VWashington International Labour-Conference" does contrive to suggest that some persons were working very hard while "Tiger" Clemenceau was embodying his ferocious desires in the idealistic language of Mr. \Voodrow Wilson. M. B.

Tm-: puzzle of Mr. Granville Barker's translation of "Deburau" is far from being solved by the publication of the text. Certainly its rambling verse, its loose rhythms and its looser rhymes are even more annoying on the printed page than they are from the lips of Mr. Belasco's cleverly schooled company. The very first lines are devastating:
Pleasure seekers of Paris, you never need be at a
Loss for amusement while you have our theatre.
There are not many such rhymes (though we have "tight rope dancer" wedded to "Constanza" and "patience" to "congratulations")—but they seem somehow typical of the irregular verse. It is only when it is spoken as Mr. Lionel Atwill speaks it in the acted play, that Mr. Barker's translation is smoothed off into even a mere suggestion of poetry, just enough to be a reminder of the deliberate artificiality of the play. In the reading it comes close to doggerel shorn of the virtues of singsong. Fortunately, the translation is well chosen as to words, if not as to sounds, and it gives the original text of M. Sacha Guitry a chance to shine out. The high points of the play are easily Deburau's speech to his son in the last act, a long and fine "advice to the players" by another actor-dramatist, and Deburau's interview with the journalist in the first act. One might quote in proof of the quality of M. Guitry's imagination Mr. Barker's translation of the passage in which Deburau finishes his description of the life of his family, all travelling acrobats:

The world was our tight rope. I sometimes see
In my dream: the whole world tented beneath the fold
Of the skies. And that old rope slung so high in air
That it stretches over sea and land. And one by one,
Their figures black against a shining sun,
My father, my sister, my brothers, all silently, solemnly
passing there.

K. M.

A REVIEWER'S NOTEBOOK.

A FRIEND of Henry Wickford's with whom I also have a slight acquaintance has expressed his interest in the passages I have printed in these columns from Wickford's letters and conversation, and has kindly sent me, with his permission to quote from them, another bundle of our friend's letters. I find a number of observations here that might, I think, interest readers of the Freeman, especially as they resemble most of those I have already offered in dealing with American life and literature. I wonder again, as I look them over, why it was that Wickford never apparently sought to publish any of his work, which certainly compensates in actuality for whatever it may want in wisdom. I remember, however, his amusing descriptions of the magazines of fifteen years ago, when whatever ambition he might have had (scanty at best, I imagine) must have been at its height; and I conclude that, having found no more inspiring medium than the old Harper's Weekly, he preferred to keep his lucubrations for his few friends. Wickford, for all his belief in "free will," believed also in the "moment"; he realized that the age of Roosevelt was an age in which the children of light were well advised in accepting a subterranean existence; and it was thus that a sort of quietism had become habitual with him. As I recall the vehemence of some of his opinions I wonder at this a little; and I am certain that he would have welcomed the opportunity of this more expressive moment of ours, when there are ten to listen for every one he could have discovered in what he may "How happy are we, we finders of knowledge, provided that we know how to keep silent sufficiently long."

"Deburau." Sacha Guitry. Translated by H. Granville Barker New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

WITH so much by way of introduction let me proceed to a few passages from these new letters of 'Wickford's' and, first of all, to one that seems to me to have more than a little contemporary interest. It touches a number of us rather closely:

There is a state of mind which consists in knowing too little while at the same time knowing nothing. This is 'sophistication,' the proudest virtue of the American intellectuals: they are like children who have eaten so much sugar that they have no appetite. One would gather from the writings and the conversation of most sophisticated Americans that they were as wise as Aristotle; whereas, instead of being wise they are only 'wise' with a sort of cosmetic equivalent of wisdom that is indeed terrifying to the uninitiated. Of all the ways in which

the art of 'putting it over' has manifested itself in our country this is surely the most tragic; for, on the one hand, it prevents the intellectual (I leave to others the pleasure of amusing themselves with this word) from actually learning anything, and on the other sets up a barrier between simple folk and those who are the vehicles of knowledge—for the same intellectuals, as it happens, are nothing less. To what is this unhappy condition due? Partly to the extreme ingenuousness of the majority of our population, which is the cause of a constant temptation to impose on them, partly to the rarity of those who are fully conscious, which puts them in an excessively good conceit of themselves, partly to the fact that those who are conscious owe their enlightenment not to their own people but to Europe, which at once destroys in them any sense of obligation to their own people and fills them with a 'light' so unrelated to their actual experience as to be a mere phosphorescence ('luminosity without combustion'). This has all happened before and elsewhere; it happens with every people that has failed to generate a conscious, characteristic spiritual life; the intellectuals are obliged to seek their nourishment where they can, with the result that they are not nourished and despise their own flesh and blood into the bargain. There is only one cure for it: that is for the American people to rouse themselves, to be aroused, and for the American intellectuals to eat grass. They have eaten sugar long enough, heaven knows.

Just what Wickford means here by "eating grass" I do not know; the point, unfortunately, is rather important. If I were able to confront him with it now! In lieu of this I can only go on to another passage which, by an association of terms, seems to throw a certain light on it. The terms in question are "grass" and "hayseed" :

The most contemptuous expression an American can use is, or has been, the word 'hayseed.' Add to this the other word 'rube' (and its many equivalents), and we have, succinctly, what the average American, of all things in the world, wishes not to be. Here we have the final illustration of that passion for gentility, for city life, for sophistication which animates our poor, addle-pated countrymen. Do not ask me for the natural causes of this phenomenon; I have no desire to write a book on the subject. But I should like to inquire what is to become of a society that feels nothing but a universal contempt for the one activity—agriculture—upon which all life depends. Why is American literature so flimsy? Because, unlike any European literature, it bears no conceivable relation to the soil, because the pursuit of sophistication has been as much the primary concern of our writers as of the rest of their contemporaries. Speak of real poetry, whether in verse or in prose, and you approach the soil at once; and that is why the work of Messrs. Frost, Lindsay and_ Sherwood

Anderson and of Miss Cather ("My Antonia") seems to portend a change in our essentially crazy life. Is not this what we mean, indeed, when we say that, for the first time in half a century, we are witnessing, in these writers, the emergence of an organic American literature? Upon their success perhaps more than upon anything else depends the ultimate repatriation of our intellectual life.

Tins talk of sophistication leads me to another note of Wickford's, which is not without its relation to the preceding remarks. He was persuaded that the American passion for gentility and success had led to the most complete confusion so far as real values were concerned. Thus I find him saying, apropos of our literature again:

and spiritual grace which constitutes literature, and that one is a writer, or a potential writer, only as one possesses this. Let us add, as a second thought for the pious, that the outward and visible sign is necessary as well.

IN regard to literature itself Wickford's opinions were not in all respects those of the majority of his contemporaries. This does not mean that they were in any sense original, or that they possessed any particular distinction. The truth is, I am afraid, but as he would have been glad to admit, they were excessively platitudinous. What could be more of a truism than the general idea expressed in the following paragraph? And yet, as he said, nobody in America believes it:

Great literature is always heroic literature. But heroic literature is an expression of heroic experience; one must have, in however partial a degree, the great man, in order to have the great writer, as one must have the great writer in order to have the great book. The modern heroic is a sort of stuffed heroic; it is an imposing skin that has been filled with shoddy. This has been so generally true that there is nothing one views with more suspicion than the heroic attitude. Let the real thing make its appearance, however, and 'the human faculties, which scatter like hounds where the trail is false, are recalled [as John Eglington says] as by the horn of the huntsman.' How many thousands of our contemporaries in all countries have experienced this 'recognition' in the pages of 'Jean-Christophe,' or 'Pelle the Conqueror,' or 'Growth of the Soil'? These are the works of men who have, in the process of becoming writers, enfranchised and transcended themselves. Similarly, Maxim Gorky has been able to turn tramps into heroes, thanks to the qualities which he himself brought to the role of the tramp. Does anyone wish to know why it is that Europeans revere their great writers, why whole populations turn out when a Strindberg, a Bjirinson, a Dostoievsky dies? (I say nothing of Latin Europe, where so,

much is _taken for granted.) It is just because in those writers (in their madness, if you will) the gods have come to life again; and men come to feel, in their presence, or in the presence of their work, that they are themselves akin to the gods 'whom their imagination has created. Thus it is that great writers are always the harbingers of revolution; for men, reminded that they have such powers, can not for long submit to being slaves.

SO much for these general views; let me close with an isolated comment. It concerns William James, whom Wickford greatly admired in certain respects while deploing his influence:

In this adopted child New England made its bow to the West. An infelicitous gesture, in my opinion; yet what was New England to do? It had lost its vital powers of command. it had ceased to produce its Emersons and its Garrisons; and the immense continent had slipped away from the authority of any ideal. There is in William James's early letters a touch of the superciliousness that remained as it were organic in his brother Henry: a fatal sign of the tenuity to which the civilization of the Eastern States had been reduced! Thus, for James, with his slender spirit, James, the child of a flaccid hour, there was but one possible role; an American in heart and body, he spent his life as a philosopher apologizing for himself. Yes, the Jamesian pragmatism is an 'explanation': it explains that the James family meant no offence in having produced one member who was unable to stomach America at all, in having had the advantages of a superior culture, in having failed to dedicate themselves to money-making. It explains all this by stating, in the most emphatic terms, that culture, intellect, philosophy itself are no great shakes, after all. If William James had begun life by disliking American ways instead of despising them he might have ended by altering them instead of bowing to them. As it is, he only added to the disrepute in which America holds the indispensable instruments of its own redemption. For without a patient belief in culture, intellect, philosophy, without a respect for values, in short, how can any nation civilize itself? "Aristocracy in thought, democracy in economics" this was the phrase that Wickford had borrowed from RE. Most of the notes I have given here strike me, in one way or another, as illustrations of it.

TI-IE Reviewer recommends the following recent books to We have still to distinguish in this country between those who are and those who are not writers. The possession of talent does not make a 'writer': every nation has its gifted popular novelists, but nowhere else are they regarded as having a place in literature unless they have followed the law of their own' individual spirits, unless they have clearly established for

themselves an existence separate from that of the herd. In America, owing to certain peculiar conditions, we have no writers more gifted than a few who have almost entirely failed to establish their own right of way: their personal development has been arrested at one stage or another while their talent has continued to blossom like a hardy perennial. Does not this account for a good deal of the confusion of our criticism, which is betrayed—not unnaturally, considering the circumstances—into accepting as literature much that resembles literature but is certainly something else? Such being the case, there is no impropriety in remarking once more that it is not the outward and visible sign but the inward the notice of readers of the Freeman:

“Civilization: Its Cause and Cure,” by Edward Carpenter.
New Enlarged Edition. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
“The Engineers and the Price System,” by Thorstein Veblen.
New York: B. W. Huebsch.
“Marcus Aurelius: a Biography,” by H. D. Sedgwick. New Haven: Yale University Press.

FROM THE CRISIS NOV 1920- MARCH 1921

VALUES

WINIFRED VIRGINIA JORDAN

I GO about my life;
I do each task,
And smile and laugh with you,
Give words you ask.

And yet, how very far
We are apart!
You know no happy thing
Within my heart!

IT'S GREAT TO BE A PROBLEM

BY J W WORK

IT'S great to be a problem,
A problem just like me;
To have the world inquiring
And asking what you be.
You must be this,
You can't be that,
Examined through and through;

So different from all other men,
The world is studying you.

My grandfather cursed my father,
The world is studying you.
My grandfather cursed my father,
For Noah cursed Ham, you know;
Therefore, my father's children,
The rocky road must go.
We can't turn here,
We can't turn there,
Because the world's in doubt,
What we would do,
Where we would go,
What we would be about.

I'm sullen if I speak not,
I'm insolent if I speak;
Must curb my aspirations,
I must be lowly, meek.
I can't eat here,
I can't sleep there,
Must "Jim-Crow" on full fare;
The world can't know
What I would do,
If I were treated square.

It's great to be a problem,
A problem just like me;
To have the world inquiring
And asking what you be.

The following letter was sent to a colored undertaker of Charleston, S. C., under the mistaken impression that he was white:

Imperial Palace,
Invisible Empire,
Knights of the Ku Klux Klan,
Office of Imperial Kleagle,
P. O. Box 1204,
Atlanta, Ga.
August 23, 1920.

As a leading citizen of your community,
and having confidence in your patriotism, I
take the liberty of bringing to your attention
a matter which cannot fail to appeal
to every real American.

The story of the Ku Klux Klan, of the reconstruction days, and its valiant services in behalf of white supremacy, insures it a place in the heart of every true American, thereby adding to the glory which clusters around the names of General Nathan Bedford Forrest, its Grand Wizard, and Gen. Jno. B. Gordon, who was at the head of the work in Georgia.

A branch of the reorganized Klan of today, which has been broadened into a standard fraternal order, thereby enlarging the scope of its work, yet retaining all of the protective features of the old Klan, should be in every community of the Nation.

Its need today, when the fourteen million people of the colored race of America are organizing, and when the Anarchist and Bolshevik forces are encroaching daily upon the basic principles of Americanism, cannot fail to be apparent to the thinking man. If you are interested in this matter I would be glad to hear from you at once.

Yours very truly,
EDW. YAZ CLARK.

FIVE BOOKS

THE Upward Path" (Harcourt, Brace & Howe) is a small reader for colored children, excellently edited by M. T. Pritchard, Principal of a Boston Public School, and Mary W. Ovington. It contains 67 selections from leading colored authors and works, and is a most excellent book for the home and school. Not the least of its attractions are the illustrations by Laura Wheeler.

R. M. Andrews' "John Merrick" is a most interesting account of a life accomplishment lived by a colored man in the South. It is well written and neatly printed and deserves wide reading.

Edgar H. Webster deserves to rank with Cravath, Ware and Armstrong as a teacher of Negro youth. He belongs to a younger generation than they and yet for more than a quarter-century he has been a teacher at Atlanta University. He has just issued "Chums and Brothers (Badger) an interpretation of a social group of our American citizenry who are in the first and last analysis "Just Folks'." It is an interesting miscellany with intimate human touches.

R. T. Kerlin's "The Voice of the Negro" (E. P. Dutton & Co.) is a most commendable idea, very inadequately carried out. This southern white professor has attempted to study Negro opinion through colored periodicals. Unfortunately he did not know his periodicals long or intimately enough to properly evaluate them as reflectors of Negro life and thought. Nevertheless, his work is symptomatic and as far as it goes, worth while.

R. T. Browne's "The Mystery of Space" (E. P. Dutton & Co.) is a metaphysical study of space according to the mathematical method. The common reader will not understand it because of the almost unnecessarily involved English; the scientific reader will admire Mr. Browne's long thought and erudition but will, if he is a physicist, object to his metaphysics, and if he is a metaphysician he will explain the phenomena of space much more readily than Mr. Browne does. Nevertheless, it is most interesting to see our thought entering these higher fields, far from racial controversy.

EQUALITY

IF Madame Roland were living today in the United States she would probably change her famous exclamation to "Equality! What crimes are committed in thy name!" Anise comments in the Seattle, Wash., Union Record on the miscarriage of law and justice in Mississippi with re-

gard to "Social Equality":

About four months ago

* *. *

They passed a law

* *k sk

In the state of Mississippi

* * *

That anyone who spread abroad

* * *

Information or arguments

* * *

In favor of

- *k *: *

“SOCIAL EQUALITY

*:: *: *

Between whites and Negroes”

* *k *

Should be FINEP

And IMPRISONED !

* *k *

And a few weeks later

* * sk

The Reverend E. R. Jackson,

* s: *

*k

A young Negro preacher,

* x *

Was going to the funeral

* *: sk

Of his SISTER,

* *k

Down in Mississippi,

* sk *

And happened on the train

* *: *: *

To give away

A MAGAZINE

:k *

* .#

That told about our doughboys

*k * *

Over in France,

sk * *

Speaking in special praise

* *: *

Of our NEGRO soldiers,

*: sk *

And telling how

* *

They were received

* * *

As EQUALS

:k

By the French!

*

*

sk *

I don't suppose

*k * sk

The Rev. Mr. Jackson KNEW

x * *

He was committing a crime

: zk *

In passing that magazine,

* *k *

But he WAS!

And so

*: *

* * *

An armed MOB met him,

* * *

And struck him with guns

* * *

And beat him with ropes,

* * *

And chased him out of town

* *: *

Along the railroad track,

* * *

Where he hid all night

* * *

In a SWAMP

In a thunderstorm,

* * *

While the mob howled about

*

Hunting him.

* x

The next morning

* * *

He crawled from the water

* * *

And made his way to town

x *k *

To the justice of the peace,

*k * *

And as soon

* *

As he told his story.

The justice arrested him

* * *

And sentenced him

* *

Without trial,

* *

To the CHAIN GANG. *

The BAIL that he offered

* *k *

Was refused;

* @

The LAWYER he summoned

Was threatened ...with lynching:

And the governor of the state

* * *

Replied to all protests:

* * *

“This fellow got, Off *

EASIER

*k *

Then he DESERVED !”

x sk *

I am quite sure.

That AFTER THAT

* sk

The Reverend Mr. Jackson

* x

*k

Will never again

* *

Be foolish enough

x *

To believe

*k *

The Declaration of Independence,

* x *

And will carefully avoid

* * *

The great CRIME

*

Of advocating

EQUALITY!

THREE BOOKS - DEC 1920 THE CRISIS

The Negro Faces America. By Herbert J. Seligmann. Harper and Brothers, New York.

Rachel. By Angelina W. Grimké. Cornhill Company, Boston.

Children of the Mist. By George Madden Martin. D. Appleton and Company, New York.

“A FIRST step in an attempt upon the - hates, distrusts and preconceptions clustered about race is to separate and examine them. There is, in fact, no race problem in the United States. There are a thousand problems with which race is more or less connected, frequently deliberately connected for an ulterior motive, in the absence of organic connection between race distinctions and the subject at issue.” With this statement as his thesis Mr. Seligmann proceeds to point the connection between economic considerations and race relations which has prevailed in this country ever since the Civil War. Just before the Chicago race riot, for instance, a clash arose between the interests of two real estate factions rather than between the two races. In the actual riot, the causes lay (1) in the entrance of migrating southern Negroes into white residential districts; (2) in hostility between union whites and

non-union Negroes in the stockyards; (3) in political enmity engendered by the fact that a certain city administration won its election through the Negro vote. A careful survey of conditions in other cities where riots occurred shows the same type of causes.

Mr. Seligmann points out that liberty and life have to be fought for almost daily by every Negro,—“the patience and determination and courage which go into the struggle are values that no nation can afford to spurn.” Miss Sarah N. Cleghorn has said something like this last, but Mr. Seligmann is alone, I believe, in defining the white Southerner’s penchant for colored woman. He works it out on a Freudian basis which assumes “that the choice of the mate is influenced by the characters impressed upon the infant male as belonging to his mother.” Many Southerners receive their first impressions from their colored nurses. The inference is obvious. We find here too an idea since carried out by Professor R. T. Kerlin—“A white American desirous of a critical insight into the society in which he flatters himself he lives could not do better than read carefully a number of race-conscious newspapers published for and by Negroes of the United States.” -

There are many valuable suggestions for intensive study on the part of the white student of race issues. Thus the author finds what all Negroes know, that the South was the real victor in the Civil War, that the vote became a class distinction only when the Negro became a candidate for it, that no real scientific data can be deduced from the measurement of the intelligence of Negro and white school children until racial characters can be isolated from the effect of social environment and that colored Americans have at last learned the necessity for organization and self-defense. Altogether *The Negro Faces America* is a book showing thought and research and calling for still more thought and research. *ACHEL* is a play as terrible, as searching and as strong as anything produced by the continental European dramatists,—

including the Scandinavian. Indeed one must think of Ibsen, for the action progresses from one depth of sad dreariness to another.

As a bit of writing, Miss Grimké has as usual turned out a fine piece of work; as a bit of propaganda it leaves something to be desired. Undoubtedly a better effect would be gained by having the humiliation of the colored children acted rather than related. One lesson the play certainly teaches: , Rachel, her mother and Tom have all let their troubles make them morbid, whereas John Strong is quite normal. Shall we not learn to look on color "as a state of mind" as Miss Ovington's Hertha puts it, —something mutable and transitory?

IGHT stories written simply and sympathetically by George Madden Martin give a new concept of the Children of the Mist who live in Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida, the rice fields of the Carolinas and the backwoods of Kentucky. These are people emerging from the fogs of slavery and gazing through a glass darkly on a freedom promised, but as "yet denied". Mrs. Martin has let the characters in the main speak for themselves so the reader must be touched and thrilled and saddened according to his own dictates. "The Sleeping Sickness" is the best story of the group, though almost all are good. But in this one Mrs. Martin aside from using a plot unique and yet inevitable, lets fall one or two gems. "It ain't de law foh my boy I'm afraid uv, Mr. Tom," Angey explained to the white man. "En' it ain't de thought uv de law whut is mekin' de boy look ez yo' kin see he duz. It's de fear uv de lack uv de law wi' both uv us." And later Angey, splendid soul, says to the white woman whose son she might have saved, "Lemme learn yo' some'n', Miss Janie. Wu'k foh de good will uv de colored folks in case de time come w'en yo' gwine ter need it; it ain't no harder wu'k dan Wu'kin' for dere ill-will." Mrs. Martin shows an almost uncanny realization of the distrust and its ramifications which colored people are inevitably bound to have of their white neighbors. Thus the inimitable Angey makes no complaint of

having vainly trusted her grandson to the
sheriff. But she remarks: "When yo' gits
yo' hand in a lion's mouth, pat him en rub
him till yo' git it out, but don't yo' put it
in any mo. . . . Puttin' it anudder way, I
might say thet a mouse ought to be a fus'
rate han' to keep away f'om cat-tracks."
J. F.

THREE POEMS

CHARLES BERTRAM JOHNSON

I

SHADOWS

WHEREVER turn I will or may,
They fall across my onward way;
But what I yield not heart to see,
I know can never master me.

II

RACE DREAMS .

THE chance here to be nobler men—
Filled with the conscious breath of
God—
Whether free in the city's din,
Or delving wisely in the sod.

III

SNOW

ALL day the clouds
Grow cold and fall,
And soft the white fleece shrouds
Field, hill and wall;
And now I know
Why comes the snow:
The bare black places lie
Too near the sky.

ELECTION DAY IN FLORIDA

WALTER F. WHITE

AN unknown number of dead, men of property and standing forced to leave their homes and families under threat of death, thousands of qualified voters debarred from casting their ballots—these constitute a portion of the results of the elections of 1920 in the state of Florida. To that list might well be added an increased bitterness on the part of both white and colored people towards each other and another black mark entered in the books of colored people against the whites for what the former had to suffer.

It is not possible to write of race relations in the South today without giving due prominence to the revival of that sinister organization, the Ku Klux Klan. There is hardly a town or community to be found which does not have its branch. Certain it is that wherever one goes in the South one hears of the “Klucks” and what that order is going to do to maintain “white supremacy”. Clothed in great secrecy and hinting of dire things to come, the pretensions of the noble “protectors of southern womanhood” would be ludicrous were it not for the vicious deeds already performed by branches in some of the smaller towns and rural communities. If one looks at the Ku Klux Klan solely from the viewpoint of the larger cities of the South like Jacksonville, Atlanta and Birmingham where the Negro population is concentrated in certain sections, the efforts of the Klan are pathetically amusing and are treated as such by colored people. Forty years ago when the original Ku Klux did effective work in terrorizing, murdering and pillaging the Negroes of the South it was dealing with four million recently emancipated slaves with all of the characteristics following in the wake of two and a half centuries of human bondage. They were ignorant, superstitious, easily frightened, poorly organized, distrustful of each other and still believing that they were inferior to white men. It was a comparatively simple matter to en

velop the Klan with a cloak of supernatural power and to send a colored man shivering to cover until a parade had passed.

Today, however, the setting is changed. A new generation of Negroes has arisen with thousands of university, college, high school and grammar school graduates among them; possessing property and the respect for self that accompanies such possessions. I have talked with many Negroes and with many white men in the South. I have found a far higher order of intelligence among Negroes than among whites, when one compares the two races grade for grade. In regard to the Klan, even the uneducated Negro looks upon it with amused contempt. His white brother, in most cases, cherishes a fatuous belief common to provincial and circumscribed minds that terroristic methods will be efficacious in "keeping the nigger in his place".

In Jacksonville, for example, a parade of the local Klan was held on Saturday night, October 30. Large numbers of colored people turned out to view the parade. One old colored woman of the antebellum type that is fast disappearing, called out derisively to the marching Klucks:

"White folks, you ain't done nothin'. Them German guns didn't scare us and I know them white faces ain't goin' to do it now."

That remark epitomizes the feeling. Phrased in better English it likewise expresses the sentiment among the larger number of educated colored citizens of Jacksonville. But beneath the amused tolerance there is a grim realization that the Klan will not spend its energy in marching—that the sinister purposes of the movement betoken no good to colored people. Negroes are prepared for trouble in every part of the South where I have been. They realize that they are outnumbered and outarmed and that death is the inevitable fate of many if clashes come.

The situation in the smaller towns and

isolated rural communities where the Negro population is widely scattered is of a more serious nature, There the Klans can wreak their vengeance on any Negro who dares offend them by being too prosperous or being suspected of some crime, great or small, or by incurring the displeasure of any white man of the community. This vengeance extends to white men who offend some loyal member of a Klan or who dares show too great friendliness for Negroes—whether for selfish or other motives. It is not considered improper but just the contrary for a white man or boy to debauch or consort with a colored woman, but no white man can treat a Negro as an equal. As a case in point read a Klan warning sent to a prominent white lawyer of a Florida town who advised Negroes to qualify, register and vote in the recent election. It reads:

We have been informed that you have been telling Negroes to register, explaining to them how-to become citizens and how to assert their rights.

If you know the history of reconstruction days following the Civil War, you know how the “scalawags” of the North and the black republicans of the South did much as you are doing to instill into the Negro the idea of social equality. You will remember that these things forced the loyal citizens of the South to form clans of determined men to maintain white supremacy and to safeguard our women' and children.

And now you know that history repeats itself and that he who resorts to your kind of a game is handling edged tools. We shall always enjoy WHITE SUPREMACY in this country and he who interferes must face the consequences.

GRAND MASTER FLORIDA. KU
KLUCKS.

Copy

Local Ku Klucks

Watch this man.

An example of what can be done and what has been done in a small town is the election riot at Ocoee, Orange County, Florida. For weeks before November 2, word

had been sent to the Negroes that no colored man would be allowed to vote. The statement was emphasized with the threat that any Negro attempting to cast his ballot would be severely punished. One colored man disregarded the warning. He was the most prominent man in his community, owned a large orange grove worth more than ten thousand dollars, his own home and an automobile. He had always borne the reputation of being a safe and sane leader among his people and had never been involved in trouble of any kind. And there lay his unpopularity. He was too prosperous—"for a nigger". He, Mose Norman, attempted to vote. He was beaten severely and ordered to go home. The press reports stated later that he had not paid his poll tax nor had he registered. On this point and the succeeding events, may I quote the statement of a white man of the town who said:

". he was denied upon the ground that he had not paid his poll tax, when, as a matter of fact, the records of this county (if they have not been doctored since) will show that he had paid his tax. The press claimed that he made a threat that he was going home to get his gun, and see that he did vote. I do not believe that anyone, situated as he was, would have been foolhardy enough to make such a threat. After the polls closed, a number of armed men went to his house, without a warrant and without authority of law as is claimed by those approving their action, to arrest this Negro. Two white men were shot in the Negro's backyard. From that time on for three days the community ran riot. I do not believe it will ever be known how many Negroes were killed. Every Negro home, schoolhouse, church and lodge-room in that community was burned, in some instances with women and children occupying the houses, and thus burned to death. . . . The foregoing is a fair sample of conditions which exist in most parts of the state."

The story is essentially as told above. When Norman left the polls he went to the

home of July Perry, another colored man, who likewise was unpopular with the whites in that he was foreman of a large orange grove owned by a white man living in New England—a job which the community felt was too good for a Negro. When the mob attacked the colored community the colored people fought in self-defense, killing two white men and wounding two, according to news accounts. Citizens of the town told me that eight or ten whites were killed but that they could not allow the information to become known, fearing the effect on the colored population. However, the mob surrounded the settlement, set fire to it, shot down or forced back into the flames colored men, women and children who attempted to flee. The number murdered will probably never be known. The figures generally given varied from thirty-two to thirty-five. One lean, lanky and vicious looking white citizen of Ocoee of whom I asked the number of dead, replied:

“I don’t know exactly but I know fifty-six niggers were killed. I killed seventeen myself.”

Whatever the number, two of those known to have died, were a colored mother and her two-weeks old infant. Before the ashes of the burned houses had cooled, eager members of the mob rushed in and sought gleefully the charred bones of the victims as souvenirs. As I stood on the spot approximately seventy-two hours following the slaughter, the remains looked as though some one had gone over them with a fine toothed comb.

An amazing aftermath of the occurrence was the attitude of the white inhabitants of Orange County. Talking with numbers of them, the opinion of the majority seemed to be that nothing unusual had taken place—that the white people had acquitted themselves rather meritoriously in checking unholy and presumptuous ambitions of Negroes in attempting to vote. Even the white children of Ocoee felt that an event similar in enjoyment to a circus had taken place. One bright-faced and alert girl of eleven when

asked what had occurred, told happily of how “we had some fun burning up some niggers”. There was no thought of horror at the deed—it was accepted as a matter of course.

Some of the methods used in the smaller towns in eliminating the Negro vote and particularly the colored woman vote were unique. In Orange and Osceola counties, a colored woman would attempt to register; on being asked her age, for example, she would say twenty-four. She would then be asked the year in which she was born. Many of them being illiterate, would not know. The registrar would then probably say, “If you are twenty-four, you were born in 1892, weren't you?” The applicant, seeking to get the ordeal over, would reply in the affirmative. Before she had been away from the place very long a warrant for perjury had been sworn out against her and she had been arrested. I found many cases equally as flagrant where Negro women had been imprisoned for such “offenses” as these.

In the same manner men would be intimidated and threatened. A white lawyer. told me laughingly of how a Negro would approach a registration booth in his county, Orange, and ask if he could register. The officials there, in most cases of the poorer order of whites, would reply, “Oh, yes, you can register, but I want to tell you something. Some god damn black is going to get killed about this voting business yet.”

In Quincy, Gadsden County, the leading colored man of the town, a physician, owner of a drug store and other property including an excellent home, on election day was surrounded as he approached the polling booth to cast his ballot, by a crowd who spat in his face and dared him to wipe his face. His “crime” was that of advising colored men and women to register and vote. He has since been ordered to get out of the town but remains—determined to die rather than submit. He has always been a good citizen and highly respected by both white

and colored people.

Two brothers of Live Oak, Suwanee County, who also were good citizens, prosperous and the owners of a large merchandise business, were called from their homes two weeks before election day, beaten almost to death and ordered to leave town immediately for the same offense of urging Negroes to vote. One has gone; the other lies

There were 1569 colored women alone registered in this ward and yet only 2633 votes in all were reported at the point of death from a stroke of paralysis brought on by the beating. Nor are these isolated cases but rather are they typical of what took place in many parts of the state. The West Palm Beach Post of October 30 carried an article with the significant statement, "Sheriff R. C. Baker will have several deputy sheriffs at the polls to arrest black violators of the election laws as fast as they appear and ask for ballots." The inference is that only Negroes violated the election laws while it is generally known that white Democratic voters openly carried memoranda into the booths, which is directly contrary to law. Only Negro Republicans were arrested for this violation.

In Jacksonville, where Negroes form slightly more than half of the population of 90,000, the situation was different. In spite of parades of the Ku Klux Klan, vicious newspaper propaganda designed to intimidate Negro voters, and the announcement two days before election that 4,000 warrants had been sworn out in blank form for the arrest of Negroes, the colored vote turned out en masse. Most of the colored people live in the second, sixth, seventh and eighth wards. An active campaign was carried on after the passage of the suffrage amendment which resulted in the registration of more colored than white women in all four of the wards. Frantic stories threatening domination by "Negro washerwomen and cooks" failed to bring out the white women to register. To the number of women was added the large registration of

men, white and colored, in the spring of 1920. Yet, in the second, seventh and eighth wards the total vote did not equal the registration of colored women alone, while in the sixth ward the total number of votes cast was only a few more than the number of women, white and colored, registered. Every possible effort was made to hamper the voting of Negroes. The polling places were arranged with four entrances—one each for white women, white men, colored women and colored men. No delay was caused to white voters. More than four thousand colored men and women, whose names, addresses and registration certificate numbers are in the hands of responsible colored citizens of Jacksonville, stood in line from 8:00 A. M., the hour of opening, to 5:40 P.M., the hour of closing the polls, and were not allowed to vote.

Unless the problem of the ballot is solved, either through reduction of Southern representation, a force bill or by some other means, and the entire problem of race relations solved through clear thinking and just dealing, our race riots and similar disturbances are just beginning. This may sound pessimistic and as though the problem were viewed only from the standpoint of an alarmist. That is not the case. It is based upon the innermost feelings and thoughts of twelve million Americans who seek to be free.

THE CRISIS - FEBRUARY 1921

BOOKS

The Lynching Bee and Other Poems by William Ellery Leonard (B. W. Huebsch, Inc., New York), gives a gruesome picture of the great American pastime. The Negro has been burned at the stake and then:

*At last the stench, or glow of embers,
brings
The wolves, or wolf-like things . . .
Such as on earthquake midnights prowl*

around
Smoulder of fallen beams and littered
ground,
And tear from dead hands golden finger
rings.
But though they crouch in slow two-legged
stealth,
Their hunt is not for wealth.
They paw into the cinders, as
hooks . . .
Snatch something out,
With gloating, starveling looks . .
A bit of rib . . . or skull . . . or crup . . .
Hot ash and finger knuckle . .
They wrap them up,
And putter round about . . .
And chuckle
And foot it off and down the road.

“THE EMPEROR JONES.”

CHARLES S. GILPIN, now playing in
“The Emperor Jones,” is that most re-
markable being—a man who has seen his
dream come true. As a little boy he longed
for an opportunity to display his rich dra-
matic gift. But as one member of the
Provincetown Players’ Company puts it,
“for years he has had within himself the
power to mount to the top of the ladder and
there has been no ladder.”

Gilpin in spite of learning early that such
opportunities as came his way for acting,
paid him but poorly, could not keep away
from the stage. Thus we find him alternat-
ing between the theatre and other callings
of a more practical nature. He has been
printer, barber and porter, interspersing
these activities with parts in variety shows
and entertainments in churches and music
halls.

In 1896 he joined the Perkus and Davis
Great Southern Minstrel Barn Storming
Aggregation, but its insolvency was quickly
shown. He retired then, as he thought, per-
manently, but in 1903 he yielded again to
his ruling passion and joined the Gilmore

Canadian Jubilee Singers for the season of 1903-1904. He enjoyed this experience greatly, for no one objected to his color. In 1905 he acted with the Williams and Walker Company. Thence he drifted to the Pekin Players in Chicago, where he had a chance at everything from the veriest slapstick acting to Grand Opera. This company consisted of some forty members of whom eleven were finally selected for playing serious drama—and Gilpin was one of them. But the death of the manager of the Pekin Players sent Gilpin back to vaudeville in the South.

He could not find work among the New York managers, who saw only his dark skin, and back he went to the “road”—the railroad—as a Pullman porter.

In 1919 he played the part of the faithful old slave in “Abraham Lincoln.”

But Gilpin was meant for something bigger than the portrayal of a purely racial part. His is a genius to interpret universal characteristics—the qualities which lie at heart in all men.

Eugene O'Neill needed such an actor for the leading part in his “The Emperor Jones”. For once Fortune was kind and brought together the man who had the part to give and the man who could act it. “The Emperor Jones” is a great play but it took Gilpin to show New York how wonderful it was, and incidentally how rich and subtle was his own interpretive genius.

The critics for once all agreed. Heywood Broun writes in the New York Tribune: The Emperor is played by a Negro actor named Charles S. Gilpin, who gives the most thrilling performance we have seen any place this season. He sustains the succession of scenes in monologue not only because his voice is one of a gorgeous natural quality, but because he knows just what to do with it. All the notes are there and he has also an extraordinary facility for being in the right place at the right time. The New York Globe quotes Kenneth MacGowan:

But without the fine playing of Charles S. Gilpin, the Negro actor, as Emperor Jones, the whole play would fall to the ground and the most striking of the silhouette scenes come to nothing. Gilpin's is a sustained and splendid piece of acting. The moment when he raises his naked body against the moonlit sky, beyond the edge of the jungle, and prays is such a dark lyric of the flesh, such a cry of the primitive being as I have never seen in the theatre. And Alexander Woolcott tells us in the New York Times:

They have acquired an actor, one who has it in him to invoke the pity and the terror and the indescribable foreboding which are part of the secret of "The Emperor Jones." Gilpin has transcended race and country. His playing in "The Emperor Jones" is a universal appeal.

MARCH 1921 THE CRISIS

THE LOOKING GLASS

ZAMBESI BOAT SONG

OUT from the waters deep
Arose a misty cloud.
The palm-tree sprang from sand; it rears its head.
The white bird sings.
Now on the silvery stream
The grasses nodding float.
The sand-bird builds her nest; her cry is heard.
The sun sleeps on.
Low in the west she goes,
The rocks are dark and cold.
The village fires rise high with red and gold.
The night-jar sings. -
—Translated by E. KIDNEY.

We are glad to welcome the first issue of Music and Poetry, published by the Holt Publishing Company, of Chicago, Ill.; also The Negro Outlook, published by The Negro Outlook Company at Memphis, Tenn. An editorial entitled "Prospective" outlines

its purpose:

The policy of The Negro Outlook shall at all times be constructive—that is, its eye will ever look beyond the immediate and to the final analysis of things. Its platform is founded upon the broad principles of human rights—the doctrine of God our Father, man our brother. We shall, at all times and under all circumstances, stand against the inhuman monster, race prejudice.

* * *

J. Morton Finney, of the Department of Latin of Lincoln Institute, Jefferson City, Mo., has written a pamphlet on Some Cultural Values of Latin and Some Latin Authors.

* * *

Two interesting books are Songs and Tales From The Dark Continent, by Natalie Curtis-Burlin, and Spring in New Hampshire and other poems, by Claude McKay. Mrs. Burlin's book is a compilation of the songs and stories of C. Kamba Simango, a Portuguese East African, of the Ndau tribe, and of Madikane Cele, who is of the Zulu tribe, Natal, Zululand, South Africa. Mr. McKay's volume is a slim but precious fulfillment of his earlier promise. Both these books will be reviewed in a later number of THE CRISIS.

AS TO THE KU KLUX

HIS Imperial Wizard (!) of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan sets forth the purposes of his organization as follows: "It was publicly stated when this modern organization was formed that it stood pledged to proclaim and preserve in America four great fundamental principles, to wit: Absolute and undying devotion to the government of the United States and upholding and strengthening all the laws of the land from the Constitution of the United States down to the ordinances of the smallest community in the nation; perpetual maintenance in America of white supremacy in all things social, political and commercial; the complete and absolute separation of church and state, and the protection of woman's honor and preserving the sanctity of the home."

The Albany, N. Y., Telegram asks pertinently:

Are the Knights who pledged “undying devotion to the government of the United States and # and strengthening all the laws of the land from the Constitution of the United States down to the ordinances of the smallest community in the nation” as strong for the enforcement of the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which provides for equal political rights to the Negro and which was written into the Constitution largely through northern influence, as they are for the Eighteenth Amendment which was written into the Constitution largely through the influence of the South? There is strong conflict here. In the first place “undying devotion” to the Constitution can not mean “perpetual maintenance in America of white supremacy in all things social, political and commercial.” There is further conflict in the fact that the South fought for state rights in the war that came as a result of the spirit of the Fifteenth Amendment. In their hearty endorsement of the Eighteenth Amendment they completely ignored state rights. There is further conflict in their attitude toward the Eighteenth Amendment with their professed determination to have “complete and absolute separation of church and state.” The Eighteenth Amendment absolutely combines church and state functions. It can be regarded in no other light than the enforcement of a church dictum through the law of the land.

* * *

It would seem that the enforcement of the Fifteenth Amendment does not figure in Wizard Simmons’ desire to uphold the Constitution, for he says in the Atlanta, Ga., Journal:

The Ku Klux Klan is for the upholding of the law. It does not in any way seek to be a law unto itself, but it does believe in white supremacy. It believes that never in the history of the world has a mongrel civilization endured. It is opposed to the Negro being allowed to vote, or the Japanese or the Chinese, because such suffrage means political equality and is another way of saying that a Negro has as much right to occupy the office of governor or any other high

position as a white man.

* * *

Paul Fulton writes in the Brooklyn, N. Y., Eagle of the memories which Negroes still hold of that other Ku Klux Klan of half a century ago. He does not feel, however, that the modern Negro will receive the new Ku Klux in the manner of his forebears: "We Negroes of New York who have migrated from the Southland are either victims of the Ku Klux or relatives of victims and we know its damnable work. Some of us have fled from our cabins at the midnight hour to the swamps and watched our cabins go up in smoke from the hellish incendiarism of the agents of the 'invisible empire. Some of us have had our hearts almost broken by the groans of its victims, and we have hushed our voices to hear one word of sympathy, and there was none. As we gather around our firesides at evening after the day's toil our thoughts unconsciously turn to the Southland, to the home of the Ku Klux, and we wonder what new hellish broth has been brewed by them. The name Ku Klux spells rapine, license, murder, intimidation to the Negro.

"Their constitution is a "league with Satan and a covenant with hell. They and their kind are doing their best to wipe out the Negro race by murder and rope. They and their kind are the only people who have undertaken to change the complexion of a whole race. There is a day of reckoning coming to the Ku Klux. We have not forgotten. The groans of the Negroes done to death without judge or jury still ring in our ears and make our nights hideous; the stench from burning human flesh still offends the nostrils of Almighty God. "The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind the entire grist." The day the Ku Klux Klan becomes active in New York that day will begin our reckoning with the 'invisible empire.'"

DOES HUMILITY PAY?

WE never bother the good Negro (nigger)," says the Southerner.

The Chattanooga, Tenn., Times undertakes

to give a case in point:

An Alabama Negro planter recently sold \$15,000 worth of cotton he had raised on his place, and The Clarion, a Negro paper published in St. Louis, ventures the guess that "there is one Negro who has not become involved in any sort of controversy with his white friends". The Negro attending to his business, working industrially to help in building up the section and adding to the wealth of his community never has any occasion to complain of his white fellow-citizens. The fact is worthy of the attention of those busybodies of the North who are eternally bent on "saving the Negro from his southern oppressors." * * *

But in Doerun, Ga., a colored man must be more—or should we say less?—than humble, for the Albany, Ga., Herald tells us of—

Rev. F. A. White, a Negro preacher from Doerun, who came to Albany after having received a severe beating, which he said was at the hands of four white men of that town, who told him they had been delegated by the citizens to punish him for teaching the Negroes in the community not to work. White denied this—he told his assailants that he had never advised the Negroes in that community against work, but this did not satisfy them, as they told him that he had set the Negroes a bad example by going about "dressed up and wearing a white collar." He said that the white men took his collar off and cut it to pieces for souvenirs, before proceeding to the task of beating him. The effects of the beating can be plainly seen on the body of White, who is badly lacerated and bruised. He said that he was stripped naked and laid across a log by his tormentors, who used a heavy leather wagon trace. The four men, according to White, took turns at beating him, one succeeding another as fast as they became tired. The night was cold and a light rain was falling, but the men went away and left White unconscious, without having put his clothes back on. He believed that they thought him dead when they left.

* * *

According to the minister's own testimony, he must have fulfilled the most ex

acting of southern standards for Negroes:
He # the better class of white people at
Doerun have always treated him kindly and
his business relations with them have been
pleasant. He declares that he tipped his hat
to white people on the streets and never en-
tered the post office for his mail until all
of the white patrons had been served. He
says, too, that he has never taken any part
in politics. * * * *

Alas! that virtue should so often be its
own only reward! The Herald concludes:
White is a humble Negro.

United States District Attorney Hooper
Alexander bears witness in the Atlanta,
Ga., Constitution of the South's mistreat-
ment of the Negro for no other reason than
that of his race:

"If the people of Georgia were told the
details of crimes that are constantly being
committed in this state against helpless Ne-
groes, they would be entirely incredulous.

"The things of which I speak run all the
gamut from the meanest of petty cheating to
deliberate and plotted murder," Mr. Alexan-
der said. "Ninety-nine out of every hundred
of our people would utterly deplore and
condemn what is going on, but something
more is demanded of a civilized people and
their government than mere sentiment. If
the people of the state permit the continu-
ance of conditions that now prevail, sooner
or later we will suffer a dreadful retribu-
tion."

SOUTHERN CHIVALRY

THE Chattanooga, Tenn., Times told a
story of a colored boy who was watch-
ing some swimmers in the local Y. M. C. A.
Swimming pool. Subsequently he was ar-
rested on the charge of stealing money from
the clothes of one of the swimmers, but
the article says, insultingly, he didn't mind
that, for his—complexion is of that color
that knows no

flush of embarrassment nor pallor of dis-
may. and his soul is not of the quality that
is apt to revolt against the associations of
police headquarters. sk *

Also The Times tells with great show of
detail of how this boy—
was arrested with the money intact, and was

promptly escorted to the police station.

*k * *

Now it turns out the next day that the colored boy was not guilty and the real offender was a young white boy, a member of the Y. M. C. A. Does The Times apologize? It not only has nothing to say about calumniating the name of the colored boy, which it had given in full, but it withholds the name of the real culprit. The lame explanation follows:

The information at first given The Times by a "Y" official was to the effect that the colored boy was the thief. This mistake was due to some confusion the official experienced in getting, the information from the police station. The colored boy was arrested, along with several other darkies, employees of the "Y" who were subject to suspicion, and he did spend the night behind the bars, but when the gray light of dawn broke the colored boy was set free and the taint was removed from his illustrious name, for the real thief had been apprehended and the money recovered.

"Y" officials, desiring to help the guilty boy to rise above future temptations, will not prosecute. As a punishment it is possible that he may be temporarily suspended from the "Y" membership, but even this suspension, it is believed, will not endure long. For his own and his family's sake his name will not be disclosed. -

THE NATION

FOUNDED 1865

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GERMANY must disarm. She must carry out the disarmament provisions of the Treaty of Versailles, and of the Spa agreement. It is true that the world would be better off had those conventions provided for general disarmament on both sides of the Rhine; it is true that the partial failure of Germany to fulfil her obligations has been grossly and mendaciously exaggerated for political ends; and it is true that the armed guards still existent in Germany are in reality menaces to German civil peace rather

than threats to France. They must go, both for Germany's sake and for the sake of the world. Germany has reduced her regular army to 100,000 men, as required by the treaty. But the further provision that "the maintenance or formation of forces differently grouped or of other organizations for the command of troops or for preparation for war is forbidden," has not been obeyed. The so-called security police is in fact a military organization, carrying guns. The variously constituted Einwohnerwehr, or citizen guard, is in many places a class military organization, intended to fight any "bolshevist" outbreak. And finally the secret "Orgesch," with a membership variously estimated at anything up to a million, is an organization at least partially armed, also anti-socialist in purpose. Germany says that she is unable to disarm the citizen guards in East Prussia and Bavaria. She must, or confess utter incompetence as a government. There is no part of the treaty more worth enforcing. These half-armed organizations provide the food on which French hysteria feeds, and tacit tolerance of them adds to the bitterness which breeds bolshevism in Germany. .

BUT if France invades the Ruhr, or marches up the valley of the Main, in order to force observance of the Spa agreements, she will be doing grievous mischief to herself and to Europe. Occupation of the Ruhr could only cut down the production of coal, and since the Spa conference last July the Germans have loyally fulfilled their agreement to deliver to the Allies two million tons per month, harsh though the obligation has been. If France attempts to cut off South Germany from North, she will be carrying on the policy of encouraging Bavarian separatism which has been largely responsible for the present impasse. If the reactionary Bavarian Government tells the Berlin Government that it will not disarm its citizen guards, French diplomacy is largely responsible for its insubordination. The French outcry against German armament is not entirely disingenuous. Apart from the French policy in Bavaria, France has encouraged Hungary to maintain more troops than the Treaty of the Trianon permits, and she is herself maintaining a military force utterly out of proportion to the real danger. Neither the provocative tone of the French nor the truculence of the Germans has been in the spirit of the preamble to the military clauses of the treaty, setting forth as their purpose, "to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of the armaments of all nations."

VON BETHMANN-HOLLWEG'S death removes a man who achieved fame not because he happened to be the German Chancellor when war broke out but because he blurted out the truth as to the German invasion of Belgium.

He was a typical routine German bureaucrat of the better type and his utterance was typical also in that it was an example of the utter inability of Berlin statesmen to gauge the effect of their expressions upon foreign opinion. It was fortunate for the world that Bethmann-Hollweg did use his famous expression; not because there is a single country which has not on occasion made of its treaties scraps of paper—the United States certainly can throw no stones—but because it clarified the issue as to Belgium. After the German Chancellor had confessed the immorality and bad faith of the invasion of Belgium no amount of German propaganda could whitewash it. Naturally, the Berlin militarists and imperialists never forgave him for his truth telling frankness. Had he been of first-class caliber Bethmann-Hollweg could have made himself the Bismarck of the war. But he had neither the force of character nor the ability to dominate the militarists as did Bismarck; and he failed utterly to subordinate them to the purposes of the civil government. Thus the disaster the Government of Germany so richly merited was rendered inevitable. After he retired, the power of Ludendorff waxed and the unrestricted U-boat warfare settled the fate of Germany.

PRESIDENT DE VALERA'S return to Ireland is the act of a brave man indeed. With Arthur Griffiths in jail he not unnaturally felt the need of taking the helm again in person. That he risks imprisonment and death is obvious. The dispatches have said that if he came to negotiate for a compromise peace the English Government would not molest him, but that if he came for any other purpose he would be arrested forthwith. He knows well, therefore, what fate may be before him, particularly as he is reported to be in ill-health. If Ireland achieves independence Eamonn De Valera will rank high as a liberator. It is- the fashion today to decry him in America because he is opposed to our chief ally in the war for the self-determination of peoples and nations. But we can fancy that Kosuth and Mazzini and Garibaldi and others are not scorning him if they look down upon him. They, too, came to America for aid, and money, and friends, and they found all three, for those were the days when the words liberty and freedom when uttered by sincere men were sufficient to arouse all Americans to a pitch of high enthusiasm. Mr. De Valera goes back, he declares, full of the spirit of America. We hope, then, that he will find the way to renew negotiations with England so that at least the killings by both sides may be stopped and the bases for a permanent settlement discussed. The President of the Irish Republic must set his face sternly against violence by his own people.

British Labor on Ireland

IT is almost impossible even at this secure distance to look at pictures of the stricken city of Cork—as desolate and appalling as the dead cities of Belgium—and then to write dispassionately of the Irish situation. How much less could that group of honest Englishmen, the British Labor Commission, after standing in the wrecked streets of Cork, think dispassionately or write complacently of the work of their Government. Their report, part of which has been cabled over and been published in the New York Times, is an impressive piece of work, a combination of careful, candid reporting, vigorous denunciation and honest shame, and intelligent suggestion. They looked at the ruins of Cork and were not afraid to put the blame where they knew it belonged—on the forces of the Crown and ultimately on the British Cabinet. They saw terror and torture following in the track of the British forces and were not afraid to admit "feelings of the deepest horror and shame." The value of the work they have done can never be lost, even if the stubborn imperialism of the Government matches the stubborn desire for freedom of the Irish volunteers ; and peace is thus brought nearer to Ireland and England by the British Labor Party, which, a little belatedly, has declared for the only policy that can bring a solution—complete self-determination for Ireland.

Apart from this single fine gesture, there is small cause for hope in the Irish situation. Police and black-and-tans and British soldiers are still being ambushed and shot and their barracks burned by Sinn Feiners. Homes of innocent Irish householders are entered, searched, burned; creameries and factories—which mean life to the people—are razed; harmless villagers are casually shot down as part of a cold-blooded, calculated policy of military reprisal. The official origin of the reprisals is attested by a statement issued the other day by the Brigade Major of Cork, part of which reads :

As a result of the ambush and attack on the police at Midleton and Glebehonse it was decided by the Military Governor that certain houses in the vicinity of the outrages were to be destroyed, as the inhabitants were bound to have known of the ambush and attack and that they neglected to give any information either to the military or police authorities.

General Strickland has gone a step farther by proclaiming that an "attitude of neutrality" is inconsistent with loyalty and will render persons liable to punishment. Thus, practically every man and woman and child in a large section of Ireland is made an outlaw, held guilty without trial

of any misdeed that may be done; and the psychology of terror and hate and suspicion which is being fastened on the Irish people makes the hope of peace grow steadily more remote. A prominent Canadian, recently back from Ireland, reproaches the people for continually stimulating their resentment against England by "dreaming of Cromwell." Headway is not made, he says, by looking over one's shoulder. Today, we may be sure, Ireland cannot see Cromwell for the smoke of Cork, and week by week new martyrs take their place beside the martyrs of the past. But England still talks in terms of Empire. Even so lucid and liberal-minded a thinker as J. L. Garvin writes in the London Observer that the passage of the Home Rule Act has made obsolete the report of the Labor Commission and its solution. He expects "that the Belfast Parliament will be constituted and opened within the next four months and a working model of home rule will be set up in the Unionist North. . . . If De Valera and his friends prove just as extremist and impractical, we must go on with unswerving hearts always open to give no more and no less than we should, while determined, come what may, to preserve the real federal integrity of the United Kingdom as a whole." This is gravely disappointing from such a man. Acts of Parliament cannot be treated with the solemnity and fatalism accorded an act of God ; it is absurd to suppose that just because a miserably ill-conceived compromise measure, pleasing to no one, has been passed by the British Parliament, an Irish settlement is thereby effected. No settlement will ever be effected until "Mr. De Valera and his " friends"—who comprise some four-fifths of the Irish people—shall become a willing party to it.

So moderate and so wise a man as Sir Horace Plunkett recognizes this fact. In two letters recently printed in the London Times, Sir Horace reviews the tragedy of British policy for the past two years and explains, in words that deserve quotation, his complete distrust of the Home Rule Act which, when he wrote, had not passed the House of Lords : Let me try to explain . . . what the "Northern Ireland" created by the bill really is. The new English Pale which is now to be set up, with Belfast instead of Dublin as its capital, is justified as a redemption of the pledge that Ulster shall not be coerced. Leaving aside the coercion of the rest of Ireland, it is almost certain that two counties, Tyrone and Fermanagh, will have to be compelled by armed force to sever their connection with the twenty-six counties of Ireland to which, if allowed self-determination,, they would give their allegiance, by a substantial majority. It is strongly suspected that the dictators of the Government's Irish policy refused to consider county option because the agricultural vote of these two counties is needed to dilute the industrial vote, which might place in power over the author of the policy a Labor ministry. ... If only

British opinion would compel the Government to drop the insane proposal to force their scheme upon us and to give us, in a democratically elected assembly, full authority to frame the constitution we want—which tomorrow would not be a republic, even if it is today—the close of this chapter of Anglo-Irish history might be as bright as its opening was dark.

Thus Sir Horace Plunkett comes to the same conclusion that the British Labor Party arrived at in its proposed policy for Ireland, which called for "the immediate withdrawal of the British Army of Occupation from Ireland, and the repeal of the present measure of coercion which is now being applied," and "the setting up of a constituent assembly, elected on the basis of proportional representation, to draw up a constitution for Ireland—on the understanding that the constitution should be accepted by the British Parliament, subject to two conditions—first, that it provided protection for minorities ; and, secondly, that it should prevent Ireland from becoming a military or naval menace to this country."

Labor in England succeeded in bending, if not breaking, the Government's Russian policy. Let us hope that its intensive campaign for Irish self-determination may help toward effecting a settlement by the methods of peace of this question which Mr. Garvin himself asserts "is not a local problem, but is a world problem"—justification enough for American interest in it.

A Quack Remedy

ONLY six months have passed since the Republican Party in convention assembled virtuously declared: "We decline to deceive the people with vain promises or quack remedies." It may be that this statement was not intended to be understood as applying to anything other than the high cost of living or it may be that the farmers were not included among the people promised exemption from deception. At any rate only fourteen Republican members of the present Congress refused to vote on December 22 for the Fordney tariff bill, a quack remedy which its sponsors promise will bring prosperity to the farmers. A tariff on farm products, however high, cannot remove the cause of the farmers' troubles. Probably every Congress man knows that. The fourteen Republicans who remained true, in this instance at least, to the platform declaration may not possess more economic knowledge than their party associates, since they happen to have no farmer constituents to bunco. The forty-one Democrats who voted for the measure are probably as wise as their fellow "Jefferson

ians," but doubtless harbor grave doubts concerning the intelligence of the rural voters who elected them.

The farmers are undoubtedly in a bad situation and it is desirable that they be relieved. But they are not suffering from foreign competition. Everything they produce or consume is heavily taxed. The Fordney bill offers no relief from that evil. Railroad rates, always oppressive, have recently been materially increased through the Esch-Cummins Act. The Fordney bill does not affect that act. Trusts exact heavy toll from the farmers. No one accuses the Fordney bill of causing a decline in the stock of any monopolistic corporation. The price of farm lands has soared so that the farmers cannot pay it and make farming profitable without getting very high prices for their product. The Fordney bill makes no change in this situation. So long as the consumers of farm products were able to pay high prices, farmers were able to make both ends meet in spite of high taxes, burdensome transportation charges, exactions of trusts, and inflated prices for land. But with the first signs of an industrial depression the purchasing power of consumers has fallen and prices of farm products have declined accordingly. There has been no lessening, however, of the drain upon the farmers' resources. They are accordingly hard hit. The Fordney bill does not alter the situation for the better. That it may do so for the worse seems to be the opinion of the fourteen good protectionists who voted against it. "You will make two lamb chops cost \$1.30 again," predicted Congressman Madden of Chicago. If Mr. Madden is right it will not be the farmers who will benefit by the increase in meat prices. The meat trust and the railroads will take care of that, or, if these fail, the speculator in agricultural lands will reap the harvest. The average consumer, the city wage earner, will have to tighten his belt and eat less mutton.

General Isaac R. Sherwood, an Ohio Democratic Congressman who believes in democracy, exposes the bill as the same old fraud and robbery. Says General Sherwood: Under a tariff of 25 cents a bushel on wheat an average of 100,000 bushels per annum was brought into the United States; and that is all. Under a tariff of 25 cents a bushel on wheat, from 34,000,000 to 259,000,000 bushels of wheat were exported. Now we are afraid of 100,000 bushels from Canada when we have been exporting from 34,000,000 bushels to 259,000,000 bushels of wheat. We are seeking to impose the tariff of 30 cents a bushel on wheat, 5 cents more than the Payne-Aldrich rate, in the absence of any information at all on the subject. Just how much revenue we will raise by a tariff of 5 cents a pound on peanuts, none of the peanut statesmen who worked for this bill were able to state. Clearly this bill is an effective move to raise the cost of the necessities of life to the plain livers of

the country and to increase the cost of plain living and to promote the general unrest, under the delusive claim that it is in the interest of the farmers.

Aside from the direct aid the bill gives to the meat combination, it is designed beyond doubt as a sop to keep the farmers quiet when, later on, tariff legislation will be passed increasing the predatory power of the protectionists' pet monopolies, such as the Steel Trust. Whether it will accomplish its purpose remains to be seen. But it does seem as though it would have been wiser for the protected interests and for the Republican Party to have foregone the opportunity to enact protectionist laws. We are clearly in a period of severe industrial depression. Protectionism is now looked upon by its dupes as a reliable talisman against hard times. To pass a protective tariff law on the edge of a depression is to risk the disillusionment of these dupes. When Columbus, according to some historians, wished to impress the Indians with the belief that he could produce an eclipse he chose a time when he knew an eclipse was about to occur. Had he done otherwise he would have exposed himself as a fraud. It looks as though the protectionists, who say they can bring on prosperity, are about to commit the error that Columbus avoided. The result may prove disastrous to their credit and to the credit of their fetish.

The "Private Citizen"

IN A New York newspaper the other day we saw a reference to our old friend the "private citizen." We have often wondered who a "private citizen" was, and why. What distinguishes him from a public citizen, and how? In this day when the newspapers are privileged to rout anybody out of bed at 3 a.m. to ask if his daughter knew the minister was a married man when she eloped with him, we had supposed that no form of citizenship retained much privacy. The newspaper reference in question was to the effect that so many applications had been made to the Police Department for permission to carry revolvers that it was unlikely that those filed by "private citizens" and "ordinary householders" would be acted upon for some months. The reporter who wrote that knows the Police Department; and (Eureka!) he has identified the "private citizen."

He is the man whose communication waits in a pile while those of other persons are attended to.
He is the voter whom politicians shake by the hand before election, and shake in every other way after.
He is the person who is too honest to pay graft and too

poor to have a pull.

He is the public that turns over its government to bankers and big business, and then says: "The Government ought to get after those profiteers."

He is the electorate who, in the face of a world-wide need for a new political and industrial vision, hopefully elected Warren G. Harding as President of the United States.

He is the electorate who, in the face of these same conditions, hopelessly voted for James M. Cox for President.

He is the man who says you can't believe what you see in the newspapers—and then goes on believing it.

He is the man who is disgusted with the result of our entrance into the European War, but will shout for another with Mexico or any other country whenever the Government and the newspapers tell him to.

He is the man who, without protest, allowed prohibition to become the law of the land, and grumbles now because he has to pay more for his liquor.

He is the man who likes to sleep late Sunday morning himself, but doesn't know but what something ought to be done to give us the kind of Sunday our grandfathers had—but didn't hold on to.

He is the depositor who loses his money when the bank fails—after the stockholders have made their pile in dividends and the officers in salaries.

He is the man who pays an income tax of a hundred dollars or so, ninety-two of which are to pay the bills for past or future wars.

He is the midget whose only contribution toward reducing high prices is to declare feelingly: "Isn't it terrible how much it costs to live!"

He is the trades unionist whose boss patted him on the back during the war as a patriot, but now informs him that he can accept a cut in wages and the open shop or "get to hell out of here."

He is the consumer who gives the grocer a list of articles to be delivered, without asking the price of any of them.

Sometimes he is a woman who, having spent twenty years of her life and love on a son, sends him off with her blessing to kill, or be killed by men with whom he has no personal quarrel, in the licensed abattoir known as war.

Contemporary American Novelists

By CARL VAN DOREN

EDITH WHARTON (1st in series)

AT the outset of the twentieth century O. Henry, in a mood of reaction from a prevalent snobbism, discovered what he called the Four Million; and during the same years, in a mood not wholly different, Edith Wharton rediscovered what she would never have called the Four Hundred. Or rather she made known to the considerable public which peeps at fashionable New York through the obliging windows of fiction, that that world was not so simple in its magnificence as the inquisitive, but un instructed, had been led to believe. Behind the splendors reputed to characterize the great, she testified on almost every page of her books, lay certain arcana which if much duller were also much more desirable. Those splendors were merely as noisy brass to the finer metal of the authentic inner circles. These were very small, and they suggested an American aristocracy rather less than they suggested the aborigines of their native continent. Ralph Marvell, in "The Custom of the Country" described Washington Square as the "Reservation," and prophesied that "before long its inhabitants would be exhibited at ethnological shows, pathetically engaged in the exercise of their primitive industries." Mrs. Wharton has exhibited them in the exercise of industries not precisely primitive, and yet aboriginal enough, very largely concerned in turning shapely shoulders to the hosts of Americans anxious and determined to invade their ancient reservations. As the success of the women in keeping new aspirants out of drawing-room and country house has always been greater than the success of the men in keeping them out of Wall Street, the aboriginal aristocracy in Mrs. Wharton's novels transacts its affairs for the most part in drawing-room and country house. There, however, to judge by "The House of Mirth," "The Custom of the Country," and "The Age of Innocence," the life of the inhabitants, so far from being a continuous revel as represented by the popular novelists, is marked by nothing so much as an uncompromising decorum.

Take the case of Lily Bart in "The House of Mirth." She goes to pieces on the rocks of that decorum, though she has every advantage of birth except a fortune, and knows the rules of the game perfectly. But she cannot follow them with the impeccable equilibrium which is needful; she has the Aristotelian hero's fatal defect of a single weakness. In that golden game not to go forward is to fall behind. Lily Bart hesitates, oscillates, and is lost. Having left her appointed course, she finds on trying to return to her former society that it is little less impermeable to her than she has

seen rank outsiders find it. Then there is Undine Spragg in "The Custom of the Country," who, marrying and divorcing with the happy insensibility of the animals that mate for a season only, undertakes to force her brilliant, barren beauty into the centers of the elect. Such beauty as hers can purchase much, thanks to the desires of men, and Undine, thanks to her own blindness as regards all delicate disapproval, comes within sight of her goal. But in the end she fails. The custom of her country—Apex City and the easy-going West—is not the decorum of New York reinforced by European examples. Newland Archer and Ellen Olenska in "The Age of Innocence" neither lose nor seek an established position within the social mandarinat of Manhattan as constituted in the seventies of the last century. They belong there and there they remain. But at what sacrifices of personal happiness and spontaneous action! They walk through their little drama with the unadventurous stride of puppets; they observe dozens of taboos with a respect allied to terror. It is true that they appear to have been the victims of the provincial "innocence" of their generation, but the newer generation in New York is not entirely acquitted of a certain complicity in the formalism of its past.

From the first Mrs. Wharton's power has lain in the ability to reproduce in fiction the circumstances of a compact community in a way that illustrates the various oppressions which such communities put upon individual vagaries, whether viewed as sin, or ignorance, or folly, or merely as social impossibility. She has, of course, studied other communities than New York: the priest-ridden Italy of the eighteenth century in "The Valley of Decision"; modern France in "Madame de Treymes" and "The Reef"; provincial New England in "The Fruit of the Tree." What characterizes the New York novels characterizes these others as well: a sense of human beings living in such intimate solidarity that no one of them may vary from the customary path without in some fashion breaking the pattern and inviting some sort of disaster. Novels written out of this conception of existence fall ordinarily into partisanship, either on the side of the individual who leaves his herd or on the side of the herd which runs him down or shuts him out for good. Mrs. Wharton has always been singularly unpartisan, as if she recognized it as no duty of hers to do more for the herd or its members than to play over the spectacle of their clashes the long, cold light of her magnificent irony. At the same time, however, her attitude toward New York society, her most frequent theme, has slightly changed. "The House of Mirth," published in 1905, glows with certain of the colors of the grand style. These appear hardly at all in "The Age of Innocence," published in 1920, as if Mrs. Wharton's feeling for ceremony

had diminished, as if the grand style no longer found her so susceptible as formerly. Possibly her advance in satire may arise from nothing more significant than her retreat into the past for a subject. Nevertheless, one step forward could make her an invaluable satirist of the current hour. Among Mrs. Wharton's novels are two—"Ethan Frome" and "Summer"—which unfold the tragedy of circumstances apparently as different as possible from those chronicled in the New York novels. Her fashionable New York and her rural New England, however, have something in common. In the desolate communities which witness the agonies of Ethan Frome and Charity Royall, not only is there a stubborn village decorum but there are also the bitter compulsions of a helpless poverty which binds feet and wings as the most ruthless decorum cannot bind them, and which dulls all the hues of life to an unendurable dinginess. As a member of the class which spends prosperous vacations on the old soil of the Puritans, Mrs. Wharton has surveyed the cramped lives of the native remnant with a pity springing from her knowledge of all the freedom and beauty and pleasure which they miss. She consequently brings into her narrative an outlook not to be found in any of the novelists who write of rural New England out of the erudition which comes of a more intimate acquaintanceship. Without filing down her characters into types, she contrives to lift them into universal figures of aspiration or disappointment. And in "Ethan Frome," losing from her clear voice for a moment the note of satire, she reaches her highest point of tragic passion. In the bleak life of Ethan Frome on his bleak hillside there blooms an exquisite love which during a few hours of rapture promises to transform his fate; but poverty clutches him, drives him to attempt suicide with the woman he loves, and then condemns him to one of the most appalling expiations in fiction—to a slavery in comparison with which his former life was almost freedom. Not since Hawthorne has a novelist built on the New England soil a tragedy of such elevation of mood as this. Freed from the bondage of Local Color, that myopic muse, Mrs. Wharton here handles her material not so much like a quarryman finding curious stones and calling out about them as like a sculptor setting his finished work upon a commanding hill. It has regularly been by her novels that Mrs. Wharton has attracted the most attention, and yet her short stories are of a quite comparable excellence. About fifty of them all together, they show her swift, ironical intelligence flashing its light into numerous corners of human life not large enough to warrant prolonged reports. She can go as far afield as to the ascetic ecstasies and agonies of medieval religion, in *The Hermit and the Wild Woman*; or as to the horrible revenge of Duke Ercole of Vicenza, in *The Duchess at Prayer*; or as to the murder and witchcraft of seventeenth century Brittany, in *Kerfol*. *Kerfol*, *Afterward*, and

The Lady's Maid's Bell are nearly as good ghost stories as any written in many years. Bunner Sisters, an observant, tender narrative, concerns itself with the declining fortunes of two shopkeepers of Stuyvesant Square in New York's Age of Innocence. For the most part, however, the locality and temper of Mrs. Wharton's briefer stories are not so remote as these from the center of her particular world, wherein subtle and sophisticated people stray in the crucial mazes of art or learning or love. Her artists and scholars are likely to be shown at some moment in which a passionate ideal is in conflict with a lower instinct toward profit or reputation, as when in *The Descent of Man* an eminent scientist turns his feet ruinously into the wide green descent to "popular" science, or as when in *The Verdict* a fashionable painter of talent encounters the work of an obscure genius and gives up his own career in the knowledge that at best he can never do but third-rate work. Some such stress of conflict marks almost all Mrs. Wharton's stories of love, which make up the overwhelming majority of her work. Love with her in but few cases runs the smooth course coincident with flawless matrimony. It cuts violently across the boundaries drawn by marriages of convenience, and it suffers tragic changes in the objects of its desire. What opportunity has a free, wilful passion in the tight world Mrs. Wharton prefers to represent? Either its behavior must be furtive and hypocritical or else it must incur social disaster. Here again—Mrs. Wharton will not be partisan. If in one story—such as *The Long Run*—she seems to imply that there is no ignominy like that of failing love when it comes, yet in another—such as *Souls Belated*—she sets forth the costs and the entanglements that ensue when individuals take love into their own hands and defy society. Not love for itself, but love as the most frequent and most personal of all the passions which bring the community into clashes with its members—this is the subject of Mrs. Wharton's curiosity and study. Her only positive conclusions about it, as reflected in her stories, seem to be that love cuts deepest in the deepest natures, and yet that no one is quite so shallow as to love and recover from it without a scar. Divorce, according to her representations, can never be quite complete; one of her most amusing stories, *The Other Two*, recounts how the third husband of a woman whose first two husbands are still living, gradually resolves her into her true constituency and finds nothing there but what one husband after another has made of her.

In stories like this Mrs. Wharton occasionally leaves the restraint of her ordinary manner to wear the keener colors of the satirist. *Xingu*, for instance, with its famous opening sentence—"Mrs. Ballinger is one of the ladies who pursue Culture in bands, as though it were dangerous to meet alone"—has the flash and glitter, and the agreeable arti

ficiality, of polite comedy. Undine Spragg and the many futile women whom Mrs. Wharton enjoys ridiculing more than she gives evidence of enjoying anything else belong nearly as much to the menagerie of the satirist as to the novelist's gallery. It is only in these moments of satire that Mrs. Wharton reveals much about her disposition: her impatience of stupidity and affectation and muddy confusion of mind and purpose; her dislike of dinginess; her toleration of arrogance when it is high-bred. Such qualities do not help her, for all her spare, clean movement, to achieve the march or rush of narrative; such qualities, for all her satiric pungency, do not bring her into sympathy with the sturdy or burly or homely, or with the broader aspects of comedy. Lucidity, detachment, irony—these never desert her (though she wrote with an hysterical pen during the war). So great is her self-possession that she holds criticism at arm's length, somewhat as her chosen circles hold the barbarians. If she had a little less of this pride of dignity she might perhaps avoid her tendency to assign to decorum a larger power than it actually exercises, even in the societies about which she writes. Decorum, after all, is binding chiefly upon those who accept it without question, but not upon passionate or logical rebels, who are always shattering it with some touch of violence or neglect, or upon those who stand too securely to be shaken. For this reason the coils of circumstance and the pitfalls of inevitability with which Mrs. Wharton besets the careers of her characters are in part an illusion deftly employed for the sake of artistic effect. She multiplies them as romancers multiply adventures. The illusion of reality in her work, however, almost never fails her, so alertly is her mind on the lookout to avoid vulgar or shoddy romantic elements. Compared to Henry James, her principal master in fiction, whom she resembles in respect to subjects and attitude, she lacks exuberance and richness of texture, but she has more intelligence than he. Compared to Jane Austen, the novelist among Anglo-Saxon women whom Mrs. Wharton most resembles, particularly as regards satire and decorum, she is the more impassioned of the two. It may seem at first thought a little strange to compare the vivid novels of the author of "The House of Mirth" with the mouse-colored narratives of the author of "Pride and Prejudice," for the twentieth century has added to all fiction many overtones not heard in the eighteenth. But of no other woman writer since Jane Austen can it be said quite so truthfully as of Mrs. Wharton that her natural, instinctive habitat is a true tower of irony.

In the Driftway

IT was a happy headline, "Too Busy to Fight," that the New York Times put over a dispatch from Mexico City telling how the editor of El Universal had declined a duel with General Alvarado. The editor, in refusing to accept the challenge, said that in his journalistic capacity he was compelled to attack many interests and could not fight duels every time someone considered that the newspaper had done him an injustice. The protagonists of world peace might do worse than to adopt that phrase, "Too busy to fight." This is an age of slogans; in our helter-skelter rush we let our beliefs be molded by catchwords instead of by processes of thought. In any controversy the side that thinks of the best slogan is likely to win. Mr. Wilson's slogan, "Too proud to fight," was snobbish in sound and obscure in meaning. "Too busy to fight" is plain and practical. It is not as fine, certainly, as "Too intelligent to fight," or "Too civilized to fight," but it is decidedly closer to the temper of the American people. If we wait to be ruled by intelligence, we may wait long. But business is business ; it is proverbially our god. What a bully day for the human race, if some future government having declared war, its agents seeking for recruits or for loans were met by the great American office-boy with the brief response: "The boss sez he can't see yuh ; he's tuh busy tuh fight."

AS a rule the Drifter does not go to the columns of the London Morning Post for his Russian news, but a recent dispatch from that paper's Copenhagen correspondent stirs him deeply. It tells of the heroic career of Russia's most popular clowns, Bim and Bom. These two martyrs to their art are said to appear in the arena at Moscow for one brief moment of side-splitting humor once every six or eight months, to get off a single seditious pleasantry, and then retire under guard to the Extraordinary Commission which sends them back to the Butyrski Prison for another entr'acte. On one recent appearance, says the Post, they committed this outrageous example of lese-majeste : They walk around the arena pretending that they are moving to a new flat. Bim has hanging from his neck portraits of Lenin and of Trotzky. Says Bom, pointing at the portraits, "What are you going to do with them?" Bim answers: "We'll hang this one, and the other we will stand up against the wall." Several Red Guards descend upon Bim and Bom, and they are rescued by the audience just in time to be turned over alive to the Extraordinary Commission. On their next appearance, after another term in jail, they commit counter-revolutionary impertinence with undiminished zeal. Bim comes into the arena bearing a tiny log of wood. Behind him staggers Bom, carrying an enor

mous sack stuffed with paper. Bim, it soon appears, has just received his winter ration of firewood, and Bom is carrying in the sack the official cards and documents and permits necessary to get it. The chilly Moscow audience roars approval, and Bim and Bom retire again to the security of the Butyrski Prison. So says the Morning Post. Having been driven into deepest cynicism by the number of good Russian stories that have turned out untrue the Drifter can accept the tale only with reservations. All governments are notoriously lacking in humor, especially when the joke is on themselves, but the Drifter still hopes to read further that Bim and Bom are living in luxury in the palace of a former favorite of the Czar and have been decorated with the red medal of the Revolutionary Order of the Slap-Stick.

EVEN in the South Seas somebody is always taking the joy out of life. Two United States marines on the island of Guam recently grew tired of contemplating the perpetually blue skies and ever-waving palm trees. They yearned for some of the travel and adventure which, movingly stressed in the recruiting posters, had led them to enlist. Two native girls, with complexions like *cafi au lait* and eyes like chocolate eclairs, and very modest notions in regard to the character and quantity of a bride's trousseau, had also found a cloying sameness about Guam but not yet about marines. So, after the fashion of the Owl and the Pussycat, all four put to sea in a beautiful pea-green (motor) boat. After many adventures they reached the land where the bong tree grows, noted on the charts, less poetically, as Yap. But there was no wood, no piggy-wig, no ring for them. Distress, a Japanese military commander with spectacles on the end of his nose, and a nauseating insistence in asking who, why, and where! As an upshot the quartet was bundled off to Yokohama where the American consul performed the marriage ceremony (whether as reward or punishment is not stated), and then sent the travelers back to the cloying sameness of Guam—unless a term in jail was a novelty for the two marines. It would seem as if our Government had a good case against the Japanese for obstructing recruiting.

The Drifter

Salem, Condita 1626

By H. C. GAUSS

So you visited Salem?
And you saw the Witch House
And Gallows Hill?
And the House of Seven Gables,
And Hawthorne's birthplace?
But you did not see Salem.
How could you?
It has been shut up in my heart for forty years.
I think I was the last who saw it.
How could you see Salem?
You never lived with maiden aunts
Who remembered better days
And nothing else.
You never went to school
Next a graveyard
To a grim old dame who
Denounced youth and pleasure
With savage Scripture readings.
You never peeped, with splendid awe,
Beneath closed blinds
To see wraiths of women
Nursing life-long grudges or heart pangs
Shut in from the light of day.
You never ran away
To sit for hours with gray men
Who talked of Hong-Kong and Sumatra
Of Singapore and Java
As one talks of the corner grocery
Or the cobbler next street.
You never had idle ships and wharves
And empty granite warehouses
For playgrounds
Nor roamed through great
Three-story houses with infinite rooms,
All full of dust of the departed
Where even the mice were venerable.
All this I did, and
I can see Salem.
I would like to show it to you,
But if I touch it,
It crumbles.

Books

The Lynching Bee and Other Poems. By William Ellery Leonard. B. W. Huebsch, Inc.

It is now eight years since Mr. Leonard published his first collection of verse, "The Vaunt of Man." Despite a hundred touches of the directest realism and the sharp and homely sagacity of many lines, the majority of readers saw in those pages a scholar who made large use of the sonnet form, cherished many moods that had been historically esteemed noble and fit for verse, and often delayed expression until experience had been transmuted into the forms of a cultural tradition. Such an estimate did Mr. Leonard but little justice. It was not, however, an unnatural one to make. In the same year as "The Vaunt of Man" appeared "A Dome of Many-Colored Glass"; in 1913 "General William Booth Enters Heaven"; in 1914 "North of Boston"; in 1915 "Spoon River Anthology"; in 1916 "Chicago Poems." The spectacular revolution in American poetry thrust Mr. Leonard off the highway of song. He was too bold for the academic taste; the rebels saw in him a beauty too ordered according to an order of art and thought which they rejected. Hence he was sparingly quoted in the anthologies and, as the eminent voices among an older generation which had praised him ceased gradually to command attention, he was left lonely beside his lakes and hills.

As far as the public knew, his creative impulse halted. He published new versions of Empedocles and Lucretius, a study of Socrates, learned and witty prolegomena to a projected rendering of Beowulf. With the world of readers these works helped him little. Nor did they help him greatly with the university which he serves and so obviously adorns. The academicians continued often to regard him with a cold and frugal eye. For they saw in him not only the scholar who had so fruitfully loitered beside Alp and Apennine; they saw in him the poet and prophet, the unquenchable sayer—always against the delusion of the day, always for the truth that should prevail, wrong today but rightly eternally, content, like his forebears on stony New England farmsteads, with little, but never content with less than freedom.

In Mr. Leonard's new volume, "The Lynching Bee and Other Poems," the scholar in him has withdrawn into the background. There is not a touch here of the Vergilian elegance and tenderness that marked so many of his earlier verses. All traditional harmonies and images have been discarded. These poems are like eagles on sunset crags and their plumage is ruffled by the storm. The verse is homely and often gaunt, written except in rare moments of recollection and conscious synthesis in a stinging American vernacular; there is no adornment and no elo

quence; irony, indignation, and vision are stripped bare and speak in their immediate characters. The subjects are the overwhelming ones that exercise everywhere the spirits of free men : The Lynching Bee, A Wartime Movie, The Heretics, The Old Agitator, The Mountain of Skulls. Here is not literature; here life itself speaks. Yet there is a profound difference between Mr. Leonard and his contemporaries. He clings to the concrete, but he never lets it master him. He is not content with a series of bright, exact images or of dark, heroic-looking outlines, however sharp and jagged, or with isolated perceptions, however keen and close. He clasps the world so tight that it wounds him, but he does so in order to compel it to give up its meaning. He can chant with the folk like Vachel Lindsay and convey the multiplicity of things as astonishingly as Carl Sandburg. But he neither creates myth nor is content with chaos. Immanent within these poems of his on the issues and in the speech of a perishable day is the vigilant and philosophic mind exercising its prophetic hardihood of thought, the historic imagination, the vision that transcends even while it records. The Lynching Bee is one of the boldest poems in the world. It conquers for literature a new series of details and images. But Mr. Leonard is not awed by his own mode of expression. At the core of the poem glows the sovereignty of thought; the tortured negro and the dead child's mother suddenly become symbols of immemorial rites of blood-sacrifice and vicarious atonement and the transference of pain and guilt. The terrible contemporaneousness of the scene and the arraignment merge into a wider interpretation of the piteous effort of men to free themselves from agony by inflicting it on others. Always in these poems there arises from the harsh chaos of earth an intellectual beauty that vindicates the nobler possibilities of the mind.

We have said that in this volume the scholar in Mr. Leonard has withdrawn into the background. But he is massively visible there. Behind the bitter gaiety of A Wartime Movie, the craggy ruggedness of Tom Mooney, the ache of silent horror in The Heretics, there is an intellectual passion free of the transitory, there is a constant and sustained elevation of spirit. Now we have almost learned to confound what the older critics called elevation of mind or spirit with safe opinions and the avoidance of humble and concrete circumstance. We are hag-ridden by the lesser Victorians and forget that both Milton and Shelley were scholars and rebels, too, philosophers and yet of the eternal company of prophets and outcasts. In this mood we accept poets who can have no essential elevation of spirit because they never seek to interpret the totality of the things that they have learned to see with so peering and exact a glance. Their gifts are many and admirable. But they do not know enough and have not enough intellectual power. That is why we have only minor poets. But that is also why Mr. Leonard has a strong chance of rising above that rank. None has surpassed him in seeing the visible world and the things that fill it; none has equaled

him in thinking about those things largely and nobly and under some aspect of eternity.

Ludwig Lewisohn

The First Congress of the League

By ROBERT DELL

Geneva, December 21, 1920

THE Assembly of the League of Nations came to an end three days ago with a rather too carefully rehearsed oratorical effort by its president, M. Hymans, and a simple straightforward speech from M. Motta, President of the Swiss Confederation, who took the opportunity to repeat the appeal for international reconciliation and the admission of Germany into the League, which seemed not to be greatly appreciated by the French delegation. I am told that more interest has been taken in the proceedings of the Assembly in America than in most European countries, where, to tell the truth, the public has been rather indifferent. Americans will naturally wish to know what the Assembly has done to prevent war or make it more difficult, for that was the chief purpose for which the League was founded. The answer is unfortunately only too easy: it has done nothing. For one can hardly count the institution of a Court of International Justice whose judgments will not be binding as a solid contribution to the end in view. It differs from the Hague arbitration tribunal only in the fact that it is permanent. But although the Assembly has done nothing effective to prevent war, it has not been entirely useless. The mere fact that forty-two nations have been represented at an international gathering, not only by diplomats meeting in secret conclave, but by men for the most part not professional diplomats meeting in public, is in itself a step forward. Such a gathering would have been impossible seven years ago. And never before have Europe, Asia, and Latin America been brought into such close contact. Latin America is almost unknown to the great majority of Europeans, who imagine that it consists entirely of countries in a state of chronic revolution and less than half civilized. Some of the Latin-American delegates have shown themselves far more in touch with international affairs than many of the Europeans. Senor Pueyrredon is a man of marked ability and force of character, who at once took a prominent place in the Assembly, which elected him one of its vice-presidents. I gathered from American visitors that Haiti is not regarded with very great respect in the United States. If you have many men in your politics as well-informed, capable, and enlightened as M. Frederic Doret, I congratulate you. We have not many in Europe. He is colored, of course, but

I would rather be governed by him than by most of the statesmen now in power in Europe. A great many of the white delegates to the Assembly were very much his inferiors in every way.

But perhaps the outstanding phenomenon of the Assembly was the triumph of Asia. The Chinese and Japanese delegations were second to none and superior to most in culture, in knowledge, in ability. Mr. Wellington Koo was quite one of the ablest men in the whole Assembly. I often wondered what these highly cultured representatives of an ancient and splendid civilization thought of the crude, primitive, halfcivilized Australians and New Zealanders. The Yellow Peril must be something like the Jewish Peril—the danger that a more quick-witted and instructed race will cut the others out. I rejoice at the election of China on the Council of the League, for the world has much to learn from her. Chinese policy in the Assembly was most enlightened, and her influence will be on the side of peace and international reconciliation. The Persian delegation had also an enlightened policy, and M. Zoka ed Dowleh, in particular, more than once intervened happily in the debates. The Japanese were reticent. They concentrated on the Council, from which they failed to obtain their two principal desires—racial equality and the "open door" in the mandatory territories. But the question of racial equality will have to be faced by the League and by the European races. Viscount Ishii announced the determination of Japan to raise the question next September in the Assembly. The ultimate choice will be between conciliation and war. Asia will not consent to anything less than equality with the rest of the world, especially now that she has two out of the eight members of the Council.

A large part of the time of the Assembly was spent in settling its rules of procedure, perfecting its organization, and defining its relation to the Council. Apart from that the only thing that it achieved which is likely to be valuable was the creation of the so-called "technical organizations"—the standing committees which, between now and next September, are to deal, respectively, with economic and financial questions, with transport and communications, and with health. This, of course, is promise rather than performance. The organizations can do much ; they may do little or nothing.

One of the greatest blunders committed was the postponement until the next session of all the proposed amendments to the Covenant, in deference to the wishes of Great Britain and France. France is particularly afraid of any amendments to the Covenant, for that document is an integral part of the Treaty of Versailles. Mr. Balfour used the fact as an argument against considering any amendments. M. Leon Bourgeois went further, and roundly declared that the

League could not do anything that would involve an amendment of the treaty. The Covenant itself justifies no such thesis. Article XXVI puts no limit on the power of the League to amend its own charter, but amendments have to be agreed to by all the members of the Council and a majority of the Assembly, so that France can veto any or all. The theses of Mr. Balfour and M. Bourgeois met with immediate protests. It was clear that the majority was against them. Their position in this matter was typical of the consistent policy of Great Britain and France during the session. The Covenant is so framed as to give all the real power in the League to the Council, on which the five Principal Allied and Associated Powers are to be permanently represented. Its framers intended the Assembly to do nothing but talk; it was to be an occasion for the representatives of the inferior countries to let off steam and to give themselves the illusion that they had a real voice in the direction of the League. The aim of British and French policy at Geneva was to keep the Assembly in its place and maintain the domination of the great Powers in the League. Mr. Balfour, in a moment of irritation, let the cat out of the bag when the report on mandates, presented by his cousin, Lord Robert Cecil, was being discussed. In what Lord Robert afterward described as "somewhat harsh language" Mr. Balfour in effect told the Assembly to mind its own business and said that the Council would do as it pleased. Incidentally he objected to the view

"that the mandatory Power should have all the responsibility and all the trouble and none of the profit"—a precious admission of the hypocrisy of the "mandate" system. And he made an unmistakable threat when he spoke of a possible conflict between the Council and the Assembly, by which the future of the League would be "profoundly imperiled." That is to say, unless Great Britain and France can exploit the League for their own purposes, they will smash it.

It was a pity that the Argentine delegate, Sr. Pueyrredon, retired from the Assembly without first putting up a fight, but he was right in holding that the first thing to be done was to settle the constitution of the League. The Covenant was not framed by the members of the League, but by Mr. Wilson, Mr. Lloyd George, and M. Clemenceau. It should have been regarded as provisional. The fact that the agenda of the Assembly included the consideration of amendments to the Covenant suggested that the Council at least admitted the right of the members to be consulted. The Covenant in its present form paralyzes the League. What can be expected of a body that can make no decision, except in one or two specified cases, unless it is unanimous? The requirement of unanimity enabled the British Empire, France, and Japan to override all the rest of the League on one important matter and led to the postponement of every important question. This grotesque provision must go, and so must the predominance

of the Council As the Argentine delegation held, the Council should be an executive entirely elected by the Assembly, and the latter should be the effective organ of the League. That would involve a change in the system of voting. At present the delegation of each state, however small it may be, has one vote and no more in the Assembly. But it is as unjust to give Haiti or Luxemburg the same voice in the Assembly as the United States as it would be to give a village the same representation in Congress as the city of New York. States should have at least one vote, and an additional number proportional to their population, with perhaps a certain maximum—say five or six. That means, of course, a large number of votes for China, for example, but the prospect has no terrors for me.

Further, as the Argentine delegation proposed, the League must cease to regard itself as a club and it should be made impossible to exclude any nation from it except by its own will. Albania was admitted into the League and Georgia excluded from it, simply because that course suited the policy of certain Powers. It was admitted that Georgia and the Baltic states fulfilled all the conditions of admission as defined by the Covenant, but M. Viviani appealed to the cowardice of the delegates by holding up before them the bogey of Article X and warning them that they might have to defend the states in question from attack. Georgia was indeed attacked by General Denikin, and Lithuania by Poland, the attackers in both cases being subsidized by the Government that M. Viviani represented! The real motive of his opposition was revealed by M. Viviani's remark that the Assembly must not prejudice the future of Russia, or, in plain English, of the Russian reactionaries.

France, too, threatened to leave the League if Germany were admitted into it. And Germany was excluded, because the British Government bartered the exclusion in order to get French support for other propositions, particularly for opposition to any sort of international economic arrangement. Had Great Britain supported the admission of Germany, France would never have dared to run the risk of being isolated in Europe, for she would have had no support except from Belgium, Greece, Poland, Rumania, and possibly Czecho-Slovakia. The Greek, Polish, and Rumanian delegations were the faithful satellites of the French in the Assembly ; the Greek delegation, of course, representing M. Venizelos. Belgium by no means always voted with France; the Belgian Government instructed its delegates to vote for giving obligatory jurisdiction to the Court of International Justice, to which France was opposed. In the election of nonpermanent members of the Council France ran Rumania against China, and Rumania got seven votes. France was supported by only six delegations in her opposition to the

motion asking governments not to increase their armaments for two years ; they included Brazil and Chile.

The views of the Argentine delegation about the Covenant were undoubtedly shared by the majority of the Assembly. One of the most interesting phenomena was the development of a consciousness of international solidarity, and the instinctive tendency of the Assembly to regard itself as the sovereign organ of the League. But the British Empire ultimately dominated the Assembly, as in fact it dominates the Council. This was not the necessary consequence of the separate representation of the British Dominions, whose delegations took a very independent line, especially that of South Africa, which Lord Robert Cecil represented with Sir Reginald Blankenberg. Lord Robert was perhaps the most prominent figure in the Assembly; he intervened on every question, but no other delegate had so much initiative and few had as much courage. On the whole he was a progressive force, but he sometimes unexpectedly gave way. Separate representation of India was indefensible and in fact a breach of the Covenant, for India is not a "fully self-governing state, dominion, or colony," nor had the government official, the tame Maharajah, and the very governmental Indian politician who formed the delegation any claim to speak on behalf of the Indian people.

The Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand delegations were among the most backward in the Assembly. They evidently had a sincere desire for peace, but they were destitute of international spirit and ignorant of international affairs. Their point of view was intensely and narrowly nationalist and their ideal seemed to be a self-contained, protectionist British Empire, which would lead inevitably to war, for the rest of the world would sooner or later be obliged to combine against it. They were unpopular in the Assembly and contributed greatly to the general unpopularity of the British Empire. There are rocks ahead if and when there is a change of government in England, for nothing could be more alien from liberal and labor opinion in England than the point of view of the Dominions, always excepting South Africa. The Dominion delegates believed themselves to be very much ahead of the "old world." To me they seemed about a century behind it. Their opposition to measures for the protection of racial minorities was a case in point. Their ideal, they said, was the absorption of racial minorities and their transformation into hundred per cent Canadians or Australians. The protection of racial minorities is, of course, an interference with national sovereignty. But as the Belgian delegate, M. La Fontaine, said in the debate on the Court of International Justice, national sovereignty means the right to make war and that is just what we have to get rid of.

The question of giving obligatory jurisdiction to the Court was an acid test. The British Empire was solid against it—even Lord Robert Cecil was on the wrong side—and was supported by France, Japan, and Greece. All the rest of the Assembly was in favor of it. The matter was settled in committee, and the majority made a great mistake in not fighting it out in the Assembly. Although unanimity was necessary for action, the moral effect of an overwhelming majority voting for obligatory jurisdiction would have been considerable. On this matter England and France have gone back, for they advocated a tribunal with obligatory jurisdiction against Germany at The Hague in 1907, when M. Bourgeois was one of the French delegates! The failure of the Assembly to deal with the economic question was also due to the non possumus of the British Empire, supported by France. This was the greatest failure of all. A great part of Europe is slowly starving to death and the whole world is faced with the prospect of famine and final economic disaster, yet the matter has not even been discussed in the Assembly, although it was mentioned in one of the general debates. The Italians did their best to get the matter considered. They wanted international control and rationing of raw materials, or at least the removal of all restrictions on their exportation. The British policy of* selling coal at a comparatively low price to the home consumer at the expense of the foreign consumer is inflicting grievous injury on Italy and Switzerland. In Geneva coal costs 300 francs (about \$50 at the present rate of exchange) a ton. Great Britain, however, refused to hear of any sort of international economic arrangement. We shall have to come to universal free trade if we wish to save the world from ruin and to secure permanent peace. Some day the imposition of import duties by any state will be regarded as what it is—a declaration of economic war—and treated accordingly.

On the question of armaments the Dominions were opposed to Great Britain and were keenly desirous that measures should be taken to limit them. But Great Britain, France, and Japan blocked the way. France would not even support a mere pious hope that armaments would not be increased. In this matter the Assembly has done nothing and could not do anything. It passed some excellent recommendations in regard to mandated territories, but the Council will take no notice of them and they will likely remain ineffective.

So the Assembly avoided division only by postponing the difficult problems. But they cannot be postponed indefinitely. Next September will show whether the League can hold together or not, for then will be fought out the struggle

gle for supremacy between the Assembly and the Council. It will in effect be a fight for the deliverance of the League from British domination. Italy seems likely to lead the opposition. No doubt Italy's motive is self-interest, but at any rate it is enlightened self-interest, and that is more than can be said of French and British policy. A change of government in England and France would of course alter the situation. A liberal England and a liberal France might make the League of Nations an instrument of internationalism and peace, not, as the present governments of the two countries are trying to make it, an instrument of domination.

Coal's Black Record

By GEORGE SOULE

MOST people know very little about the coal industry except that it is the perpetual bad boy of the American industrial family. It is always getting us into outlandish trouble of some kind or other. There are shortages which nearly close down the railroads and freeze us out in zero weather. Prices mount at the most inconvenient times to prohibitive figures. There are strikes which cause both expense and wasted wrath ; first we condemn the miners for their impudence in demanding a thirty-hour week, and then we discover that the miners are actually asking for longer hours than they had been permitted to work, on the average, throughout the year. We are told that some coal companies made war profits running into the thousands per cent, and yet the miners cannot be paid a subsistence income. We hear of feuds and dispossessions and murders in the war of the operators against the union in West Virginia—and such things have been going on for years.

Now, listening to the investigation of the Calder Committee, we discover that high prices have been boosted by four or five unnecessary "brokers" and middlemen between producer and consumer. We discover that the War Department appointed as its purchasing agent a large operator who bought coal from his own mines at more than twice the cost of production. We discover that as a result of a threatened bituminous shortage in some localities the Interstate Commerce Commission authorized the issuance of priority orders for coal shipments, specifying that in carrying out those orders contracts previously signed might be broken. Then we find that subordinate transportation officials forged and padded the priority orders, accepting bribes for doing so, so that coal might be diverted to speculators and contracts favorable to the purchasers might be invalidated. These

measures having been taken to deal with the "shortage," we discover that up to November 6, 1920, 46,000,000 tons more coal had been mined in the United States than in the corresponding period of 1919. We read that in Scranton, Pa., the heart of the anthracite district, anthracite is so scarce that in some households there is actual suffering. And at length we get some measure of the former profiteering by seeing coal fall. Inside of a few weeks the price of export coal fell from about \$14.50 at the mine to about \$3.50. Whereupon the operators said that it would be "unprofitable to continue to mine coal under \$3.00." Apparently, then, they had been making a sales profit of some 400 per cent on every ton when the price was fourteen dollars.

After this happy and bewildering experience with the vagaries of coal, we are shocked and astonished to hear a Republican Senator, Mr. Calder, threaten something very like nationalization of the industry. Does not everyone know that government ownership is a blight on enterprise, and that the present system is the ideal one because it "works"? What can the Senate Committee be thinking of when it reports: "Our investigation into the coal situation has convinced us that private interests now in control of the production and distribution of coal, in spite of the efforts of some, are actually unable to prevent a continuance or repetition of the present deplorable situation, and that it is the duty of the Government to take such reasonable and practical steps as it may to remedy the evil"?

A rough outline sketch may be helpful to understanding. Anthracite is not nearly so important as bituminous, but it comes first to our attention because most of us depend on it to keep warm. A preponderant part of the anthracite deposits in the country are owned by companies closely affiliated with a few railroads. The greater part of these fields are held out of production, but of the anthracite actually put on the market, the railroad mines account for about three quarters. The mining companies themselves make for the most part a very modest profit. In some cases their sales are handled by separate, related companies which make a large profit. But in most cases the lion's share of profit goes to the affiliated railroad carriers. The freight rates on hard coal are said by W. Jett Lauck, railroad and coal economist, to be two and one-half to three times the operating cost of transportation. The income from coal carrying comprises from six to sixty per cent of the total freight revenues of the anthracite roads. Thus immense earnings are created. In some cases they have been made the excuse for greatly increased capitalization. In some cases they are used to pay dividends on a capitalization based on the undeveloped coal deposits—as if a landlord should charge enough rent for a single occupied house

to pay a profit on a hundred others which were empty. In the case of roads which have not gone the limit in possible capitalization, the surplus and dividends show the situation. The actual earnings on the capital stock between 1913 and 1918 have averaged in the case of the Lackawanna from 24 to 36 per cent, in the Lehigh Valley 29 per cent, in the Central Railroad of New Jersey 27 per cent.

The merchandising of anthracite, compared to that of bituminous, is on a fairly decent basis. There are, ordinarily, few irrelevant middlemen. But the trouble is that the anthracite market is in large measure dependent on the bituminous market, because when soft coal is scarce, hard coal is often used in its place, and its price rises. When there is a shortage of cars—as there usually is—bituminous drives anthracite off the roads and the retailers are thus given a chance to charge enormous figures for what hard coal they can get.

The mining of bituminous coal is in the hands of many companies. While the bulk of the production in Pennsylvania, for instance, comes from a small group of large operators, the marginal production is widely scattered. And there is a great difference in the cost of production of various mines, due in large part to the difference in the width of seams, and in lesser degree to differing efficiency of management and other factors. In the year 1918 the cost of production of 199 operators in the southwestern field of Pennsylvania ranged, according to the Federal Trade Commission, from \$1.21 to \$4.04 per net ton. Nearly 77 per cent of the total production cost \$1.99 or below. Over 90 per cent cost only \$2.20 or below. When there is a great demand, it is the highest-cost mine which fixes the ultimate market price. In order to get that last 10 per cent of soft coal on the market, enormous profits had to be paid on the other 90 per cent. This is an inevitable feature of widely distributed private ownership.

There is also the artificial shortage caused by insufficiency and improper distribution and use of coal cars. The operators have never devised successful ways of storing coal. If they have no cars to put it in, mining operations stop. This causes scarcity in the market, and terrific wastage and unrest of labor. Lucky is the miner who gets a chance to work more than two-thirds of the year. Scarcity of bituminous coal is thus chronic. It creates a competitive demand, and attracts hordes of speculative middlemen. Although \$3.50 a ton is a liberal estimate for the cost of production at the mine, the consumer is fortunate to get his soft coal at four times that price. This in spite of the fact that transportation rates to few industrial centers in the country are more than \$3.00 a ton, and a fair overhead

for the local distributor was reckoned by the Fuel Administration, under war prices, at the same figure.

In 1917 the Federal Trade Commission examined the situation and came to the obvious conclusion that "if a uniform price were fixed many mines will be shut down unless the price is high enough to make the highest mine cost profitable." It therefore suggested ascertaining scientifically the cost of production at each mine, paying the owner or operator a fair profit, and then pooling the total national supply in order to make possible its sale at an average figure. This is what Great Britain has now been doing for some years. Even then, distribution could not be effective "without similar control over all means of transportation, both rail and water, and to meet this the pooling of railroads and boat lines is clearly indicated." The Commission therefore recommended the operation of the railroads as a unit on the government account. But we have now returned the railroads to the management of private, competing owners, on account of the "superior efficiency" of that arrangement.

Mere government control of mines and railroads could eliminate enormous waste in the sale of this product which lies at the basis of our national economy. Government ownership would make possible additional savings in production. Production engineers like Walter N. Polakoff show how heat and power could be distributed at a small fraction of their present cost by a radical revision of the technique of the industry. Highly valuable chemical by-products of coal—such as dyes and fertilizer—which are now wasted, could be extracted at the mine mouth. The coal could then be transformed into electricity and much of the cost of transportation saved. In addition, the inefficient use of coal in many antiquated furnaces would be avoided. The high-cost mines could be eliminated, and labor could be continuously employed at good wages. These reforms could not be effected in a short time, of course, but they have not even been begun under private ownership.

Aside from such ambitious plans, however, there is not the slightest doubt that with no changes in technique, a merely efficient management under unitary control in the public interest would be of great value. Whether the present Congress will go so far as to adopt such a measure is doubtful in the extreme. It cannot do so much courtesy to the god of private enterprise. We shall have to freeze and starve more than we have so far before the lesson is driven home to us. In the meantime the effort of the more daring Senators will probably be to educate us to the problem. Some form of national oversight may be established. A governmental agency may be given the power to

examine the companies' books, so that publicity may be accorded to the figures. This cumbersome supervision would provide for the public a minimum of protection against conscienceless and wilful profiteers, but it would leave untouched the maladjustments of the industry which, in spite of anyone's good intentions, keep us in a constant turmoil about our coal.

Jan. 19, 1921] The Nation

In the Driftway

SO Betelgeuse is twenty-seven million times as big as our puny little sun, and may have scores of inhabited worlds hanging about it, each with a dozen attentive moons as large as the ball of mud which we find so troublesomely diverse and big. The Drifter wonders if those far-off planets have canals, and if their astronomers think to discover canals on other planets, and if the small boys of Betelgeuse's satellites have half as good a time in those sluggish streams as he had in the old Erie Canal. The Drifter considered himself something of an astronomer in the days when the Erie Canal lay just beyond the school room windows, and he remembers many an anxious night dreading the sight of ruddy Betelgeuse—"bottlejuice," he called it—rising above the winter horizon to warn him that the hour was already past when his parents had bade him be home.

WILL the Barge Canal ever be as fair as the old Erie? And can the canals of Mars or of more distant constellations have half the charms of that muddy ditch? Do the boys of Betelgeuse's universe, so far away that light, speeding 186,000 miles a second, take a hundred and fifty years to reach the Erie's towpath, swim, and skate, and, when the canal is low in autumn, boldly chase the dangerous bullhead in its shallows, as the Drifter did in the old Erie? The Drifter still thrills at the thought of the magnificent mudfields of the Wide-Waters when the canal is emptied, ■when every puddle holds new wonders, and adventure calls the small boy over his shoe's depth of mud in search of mussel shells more beautiful to his awed eye than any mother-of-pearl, of larger snails than any canal had ever before yielded, and of stranger fish to languish and die in his untended aquarium. He can still feel a shudder at the thought of winter's first ice, when he had to slide hard to get past the thin edge to the solid ice in the middle, and when the unwary skater gliding magnificently Fairportward might feel the ice crack and give under his feet, and

sit ingloriously on the mud bottom in two feet of shallow but very cold canal. He recalls the Dingle, watered by the canal's leakage, where he saw his first Cape May warbler; he remembers the guilty joys of swimming in the canal's forbidden dirty water, and the sense of God-sent retribution that came with a rash that followed a swim, but which later years taught him was due to poison sumach bordering the canal. And the locks, and the old lock-tender, and hours passed in watching them; and his first overnight vagabond journey on a canal-boat. Do the Martian boys and the little Betelgeusians have half as good a time with their canals? Or have they such developed brains that the children are too mature for unintellectual joys?

ANATOLE FRANCE, meditating upon the inevitable chilling of this world of ours, wonders what race of beings will succeed man when the temperature drops too low to support our frail existence. If evolution be true to her erratic past, it will not be a direct offshoot of our temporarily dominant genus homo. Anatole France looks to some form of butterfly as Life's highest achievement. The superhumans of Mars and Betelgeuse may, like the butterfly, be inferior in brains, but surpass us in other ways. The butterfly, instead of wasting love in youth, and living on into gray old age, is caterpillar first; he eats and plods when young, and then, emerging into winged beauty at the end, lives for a brief season untrammelled by harsh needs of food and toil, has love at the last, and dies in the full blow of life's climax. Perhaps the dominant creatures of the distant worlds fret less, with less brains than we, but are born senile, and grow old into youth's warm passion. The Drifter

THE DIAL - JANUARY 1921

THE DECLINE OF THE DRAMA

BY GEORGE MOORE

I would like to avail myself of this rare occasion to say my little say on a topic that seems, from its frequency in the newspapers, to interest everybody—the decline of the drama. It appears from the papers that I read last Sunday that the dramatic critics themselves cannot sit through the plays now in course of performance at the London theatres, and leave dejected, broken in spirit, after the second act, to return to their homes to write discourses on the almost universal stupidity to which, unfortunately, they are obliged to pander.

The articles of the discontented critics are concerned with the perennial problem of the actor manager, and the difficulties of

obtaining enough rehearsals in the theatres that call themselves repertory theatres. State-subsidized theatres also occupy the pens of the critics, and everyone is certain that if some modifications were made, talent would return to the theatre. As certain are they as they ever were in the 'nineties, when the common critical announcement was that Wagner had made the writing of a bad opera from henceforth impossible. It was thought, too, in the same 'nineties, that Ibsen had hit upon a dramatic road that would lead everybody to Parnassus who cared to go there, even Mr • But it would seem that whosoever produces a masterpiece, so far from helping his contemporaries to go and do likewise, poisons their aspirations: till the masterpiece is born the majority of men and women write the music and literature of their own time, and Art continues her matronly march down the well-known ways; but on the advent of the masterpiece Art is thrown into dismay, the young attach themselves to the new formula, and the elders are broken-hearted, as well they may be, for from henceforth they are old fogies.

I remember well how the spell of the seduction of unity stole over me in the stalls of the Gymnase Theatre in Paris in the 'seventies, and the ravishment with which I watched the skill of the dramatist, Dumas fils, introduce his characters into the same room one after the other, finding specious entrances and exits for all, and how my excitement at his handicraft was increased as the curtain rose again on the same furniture, not a table or a chair moved out of its place; the hand of God seemed in it all when on turning to the programme I learnt that the whole action of the play was comprised in the short space of a few hours. Maybe the play that astonished me out of my wits was Monsieur Alphonse, or may be it was the work of some other craftsman, for there are always many about who can avoid soliloquies and asides. But to do this, and skilfully, does not carry the dramatist, so it would seem, any nearer to Shakespeare than he was before; an unpopular doctrine this is, almost a heresy, but I will dare to say that it is better to write Hamlet with soliloquies and asides than Monsieur Alphonse without.

At that time a large volume of Restoration plays was in my hand constantly, and my scorn of their craft brimmed over when I noticed that not one or two, but sometimes five, changes of scene occurred in each act, and that asides and monologues were the almost common means of expression of these forlorn dramatists. It may be that I dreamed of astonishing the London public with plays composed in the manner of Monsieur Alphonse, and it may be that no such thought entered my head, and it matters to nobody what I thought, or think that I thought, of Mr Jones' play, Saints and Sinners; it comes into my mind naturally, for it is the last, or one of the last, plays written in our old English dramatic formula, come down to us, with some variations, from the sixteenth century—three, four, or five scenes in each act, a forest glade followed by a parlour, a parlour by a street scene, a street scene by

a lady's boudoir. The reader must think out for himself where the dramatist might have placed his fifth scene—in a cottage on a lonely heath, by the sea-shore, or in a tavern. It matters not where the scenes are placed; it's enough to say that all these changes were made within sight of the audience, the side scenes being pulled away by the scene-shifters. The craft of Saints and Sinners must have seemed to me very gross (after a long sojourn in France it could not seem otherwise), and it may be that once again I indulged myself in a dream of a play in three acts, in which the whole action would be confined to a parlour, each act comprising fourteen exits and entrances. Indeed, it could not have been else than that my thoughts turned to such a play, for the belief of everybody in the 'nineties was that to recapture Shakespeare we must denounce monologues and asides. Strange are the beliefs of men; but I am meditating history, so to continue.

It was in the late 'eighties or the 'nineties that Ibsen began to be spoken of and *The Doll's House* was produced; and it was noticed at once that the master allowed himself to drop into short soliloquies, but these, it was confidently predicted, would disappear as the master developed his craft. And for once the critics were right in their predictions; Ibsen forebore henceforth to soliloquize, to everybody's great delight, for everybody's delight in Art is in an externality of no moment whatever. Nobody remembered that the most beautiful things in Shakespeare, and the most real, are the soliloquies, and no thought was given to the fact that Ibsen's earlier plays (the plays in which he used monologues and asides as frequently as Shakespeare) are the most beautiful, and of all the most real. The master has never expressed himself better than in some of the monologues in *The Pretenders*.

But critics are not usually interested in the result, but in the means, and one of the master's greatest works was alluded to as "a youthful indiscretion," the reason being that for the last twenty years the critics have been busy cutting and pruning and making ready the road for the feet of the young Parnassians, who have, according to the Sunday papers, failed to "play up." The critics stand waiting; the monologue has been felled, the aside has been grubbed up, and no doubt if a Don Quixote and a Sancho were sought in this journalistic reformation they would be found, for these are everywhere; but in finding them I should not escape a charge of attacking contemporaries who have, perhaps, on occasions, spoken well of my work. It will be well, therefore, to think of other designations that can point to nobody, and on returning from the window I bring back a remembrance of a lantern and a post-box; as nobody, not even the most invidious, can fix these names upon men now living amongst us, I will call upon them if their opinion should be needed.

The afternoon tea had just come in and I was filling a cup when a ring came at the front door, and who do you think my visitor was, reader? None other than my old friend Lantern. You will

understand easily that it was delightful to me to hear the maid servant announce him; you can see me, no doubt, in your mind's eye start from my chair, and hear me beg of him to share my tea. He had not been to see me for a long time, and in his apologies The Brook Kerith happened to be mentioned. "But, my dear Lantern," I said, "my affection for my friends is not dependent upon the fact that they read or do not read my books." "My case is worse than not having read The Brook Kerith," said Lantern in a very grave tone. "The truth is, I couldn't get on with it." "Now how was that?" I asked, tickled in my incurable curiosity; and having always clung on to the belief in Lantern's shrewdness I was a little disappointed with the reason he gave for not being able to get on with The Brook Kerith. It appears that all the long pages about Joseph of Arimathea put him past his patience, for he wanted to know what I thought about Jesus and Paul. It was on my lips to remark that if I had begun with Jesus I could have escaped barely from the charge of rewriting the Gospels, but not wishing to embarrass Lantern (I love all Lanterns, be they bright or dim), I fell back upon Heine's celebrated answer to Berlioz, who came to see the lonely poet when he was dying: "Always original, Berlioz." At which remark Lantern's wick spluttered in its socket for a moment, but it flared up quickly, and we fell to talking of Shakespeare, passing on to the way of the drama, the lighting of which had been my friend's care for many years.

It may well have been that he asked me if I were writing a play, and if that was his question, I answered that the modern play was so strict a convention that the form would have to be enlarged, broken up, as the old English comedy was scrapped about thirty years ago. Lantern asked me why I did not undertake the task of writing something different from the ordinary play, but as nothing would be gained by noticing his irony, I answered that it required many years to create a new convention, and that perhaps no single man could do this, but a generation of writers. "Not only the man, but the moment is required, as Matthew Arnold has put it. He might have said men instead of man, for no man creates a literary tradition." "But a man can start one," replied Lantern. "Do you think so?" I asked. "Are you sure?" He answered, "Ibsen," and we talked for some time, myself claiming that the Ibsen formula could be discovered in France, the gist if not the spirit of it at least. In all these debates many words are wasted, and to bring to an end an argument in which neither was interested, I remarked that if I had to begin my life again and my lot was cast in the theatre, I should not be satisfied with following the rut, but would seek (unconsciously perhaps, but I should seek) new formulas—the old bottles would not have satisfied me for the new wine, if I had any. "In what direction would you have sought the new formula?" Lantern asked. "Or do you think it would have come of itself?" "The new form," I replied, "would come unconsciously in response to some personal need." "Can you tell me the need, or indicate it?" "Yes," I answered, "I think I can

do that."

"The straitened form into which the drama has fallen would have set me thinking how it might be widened, and my take-off would have been the five-act comedy of our ancestors, each act consisting of three, four, perhaps five, different scenes changed within sight of the spectator. This form would allow of more story, more variety, in a word, more life. If I can rely on your patience?" Lantern nodded acquiescence. "The stream of story," I continued, "that the present dramatic formula permits is but a mere trickle; it is not of our tradition," and to rouse Lantern out of a lifetime of prejudices I told him that before he came I was thinking of the joy I had experienced when a boy in the stalls of the Gymnase during a performance of *Monsieur Alphonse*. "You have outgrown such crude aestheticism," he said drily. "We grow into ourselves, Lantern, if we grow," I answered. "But," said Lantern, "you would not surely return to the whistle, at the sound of which a back cloth is lowered and the side scenes advanced or withdrawn?" "I am afraid I would," I answered, "and shall be able to give you some reason for preferring the English form, which has come down, with some modifications, from Shakespeare to Congreve, and was accepted by Sheridan and Goldsmith; but I would ask you first to admit that a literary form may shrink and wither, and that—" "The dramatic form," said Lantern, "is a hard material (stone or marble it may be compared to) through which the dramatist has to cut his way with hammer and chisel."

"But, Lantern, form is not meritorious in itself, it is but a vehicle, and a man is not a greater artist because he writes in the harder form of the ballade rather than in the looser form of the stanza." "The soliloquy," interposed Lantern, "is to some extent defensible, but words should never be spoken on the stage that the bystander is not supposed to hear," and shuddering slightly he spent the rest of his feelings on his watch-chain. "But will you tell, Lantern, why an aside should never be indulged in? Will you give me a reason? Shakespeare, all the Elizabethan dramatists, Goldsmith, Sheridan, and all the early French dramatists use the aside—why, then, Lantern, why deride it?" "Because the convention that only the audience hears the aside is too crude," he answered. "We have progressed since then." "In what, dear Lantern?" I asked. "Not in the results, surely?" "In the means," he replied, and instead of twitting him, as I might have done, for looking upon the means as more important than the end, I said: "You think we should cling closer to Nature?" Lantern nodded, and I continued: "But we do not get nearer to Nature by imprisoning all our characters into a single set." "You were thinking," he answered, "of the joy that you experienced when a boy at a performance of *Monsieur Alphonse*." "I was, Lantern, and busily comparing the different literary methods of Mr Henry Arthur Jones in *Saints and Sinners* and Dumas fils in *Monsieur Alphonse*." "A strange association of styles," said Lantern, and

he seemed interested to hear how two plays so different should have come into the same meditation. "Saints and Sinners," I said, "was the last play written in the old English formula, several changes of scene in each act and the dialogue falling into soliloquies and asides, according to the nature of the story, without the author stopping to ask himself if the critics would approve, the method in its innocence reminding me of a picture by Francesca, in which one of the figures throws a shadow; the other figures in the picture are shadowless." And I waited for Lantern to admire the point that I had made, but instead of rendering homage to it, he asked me, I thought a little drily, which play I preferred—*Mon sieur Alphonse*, or *Saints and Sinners*. "Both are forgotten," I answered. "Then," he said, "you're talking about means rather than results," to which I made reply that I did not say, nor did I think of saying, that an enlargement of the formula would certainly lead to better results (of the results we can never be sure); my meaning was that the drama has fallen into the straitness that might be compared to certain forms of French verse.

"It was in the 'nineties that Ibsen appeared in England—"
"But Ibsen," said Lantern, "whom you used to admire, wrote his greatest plays without dropping into monologues and asides."
"He did, Lantern, he did; we will speak of Ibsen's craft and the fruit it has borne presently. At the present moment I am thinking of you walking at his head, with Post at his heels. By the way, I haven't seen Post for a long time, many years; I hope he is well?" "We haven't seen each other lately," Lantern answered, "but I believe him to be quite well. You were saying that in the 'nineties Ibsen appeared, with me walking at his head and Post at his heels." "Yes, declaiming like the King of Dahomey's Apparitor, who walks on certain occasions in front of the King's bull, crying, this is the bull, the one bull, the only bull. I can see you still in my imagination leading the ringed bull, the little hairy Norwegian bull, crying, here is the bull of drama, the one bull, the only bull, and little Post in the rear crying, this is the bull, the King of bulls, the bull with the crumpled horn, that tossed the aside and trampled the soliloquy, contriving exits and entrances from the same drawing-room with a skill unequalled by any French dramatist, and writing a dialogue that makes French dialogue seem very halting." "Did Post ever say that?" Lantern asked. "Somehow I don't recognize him in it. It is much more like your own talk." "No man ever wrote dialogue as skillfully as Ibsen," I answered, "and his dreaming, questioning, spiritual soul was possessed of a particular sense of beauty." "Well, then," cried Lantern, "you have the result; the means produce the result." "Ibsen was a man of genius," I cried, "and like every man of genius he made the form that he acquired in France his own, extracting all that fourteen entrances and exits in each act can give, just as Wagner extracted all the beauty the leit-motif had for giving. In other hands the leit-motif is abhorrent, and in the same way the fourteen exits and entrances in each act are abhorrent except in Ibsen. The form has given what it could

give. Moreover, the form grew up with Ibsen, and it was his need."

"The romantic formula having ceased to interest him, he turned to the realistic," said Lantern.

"But, my dear Lantern, how can dramatic Art be described as realistic? We begin by supposing a room with three walls; the convention that the fourth wall has been removed is the first condition of the existence of the theatre. And if the scene be in the open air, the painted canvas which does duty for trees wouldn't deceive a child, and the better painted the trees and the rhododendrons are, the uglier they are. To look at even the finest pictures in the National Gallery for more than five minutes is weariness, but on the stage we have to look at the same rhododendrons for two hours and a half. Then we are asked to accept a gas-light shining through a hole in a curtain as a star, and if there be any haymaking in the play the moon will be, of a certainty, as big, or bigger, as the moon that lights George Mason's harvesters home from the fields. Conventions and artifices are part and parcel of the Art of the stage, of all Art, for Art is not Nature, because it is Art; why, then, should you object to soliloquies and asides, preferring in the interests of reality eighty-four entrances and exits in the space of two hours and a half?" "Eighty-four?" interjected Lantern suddenly. "Yes, eighty-four," I replied; "fourteen entrances and exits in the first act are twenty-eight, twice twenty-eight are fifty-six, and twenty-eight added are eighty-four." "But," said Lantern, "the number of exits and entrances depends on the number of characters." "Ibsen," I answered him, "could write a play with five or six characters. To do this was his special gift, but the modern English comedy and the French contain if not eighty-four at least sixty-five or seventy exits and entrances. Have you never, Lantern, hand on your heart, experienced a feeling of exasperation when in the third act a man says that he will go and smoke a cigar on the terrace? In that horrid moment we feel dramatic Art to be more straitened and artificial than the ballade, the kyrielle, the rondeau, the rondel, the Sicilian octave, or the sestina. In its seventieth exit or entrance the modern comedy attains to the artificiality of the chant royal, and you will admit that this form has never produced a poem." "But the ballade has produced many poems," said Lantern, "and the form is nearly as strict as the chant royal." "The ballade," I answered, "existed long before Villon. In the works of Gower, a poet who wrote in three languages with equal facility and equal mediocrity, will be found fifty examples of the ballade quite as correctly written as Villon, but without his poetry. Gower lived a hundred years before Villon, and during these years the ballade was waxing to the perfect flower that it attained in Villon's ballade to his mother. More it had not for giving, and it died like a flower that has seeded. Even the genius of Banville was not able to breathe life into it, and the history of the ballade is the history of all Art formulas. "To return, Lantern, from poetry to the stage. I would like to ask you if the leanness of the dramatic formula does not awaken

hope in you that somebody will be born who will dare to write long speeches in place of love scenes in which the lovers are almost mute. Instead of the love scene in *Romeo and Juliet*, we have the swain and his lady addressing the very curtest remarks to each other:

HE. Have you nothing to say to me?

SHE. No, no.

HE. No hopeful word?

SHE. Do not press me to speak.

HE. To-morrow?

SHE. Perhaps.

HE. You will write?

SHE. Yes, I will write.

[Exit. The lady returns to the fire, which goes out slowly.

CURTAIN.

Such scenes as these, and they are common in London plays, set me wondering what Rachel, Désclée, Frédéric Lemaitre, and Salvini would think if they were asked to speak such dialogue. I can imagine them gathering up their grave clothes, anxious to return to their tombs, whispering, "But we are men and women, and can make nothing out of the speech of daws, jays, and magpies." A parrot is loquacious compared with these latter-day dramatists. I remember a comedy at the Haymarket in which the leading characters played dominoes, and my remembrance of the dialogue is:

'Double-six.' (Long silence.)

'I can't play, I must draw one.' (Long silence.)

'It's your turn. (Long silence.)

An old woman occupied a corner of the stage, uttering now and again, as a parrot might: 'I don't think that man will come in to-night.' I will not say, Lantern, for I wish to be quite fair with you, that in this play we have one after your own heart, but I do say that we have in it the ultimate fruit of the realistic formula, no soliloquies, no asides, no long speeches."

"A good deal can be proved by choosing examples from unknown plays," Lantern answered, and I know he was vexed from the way he played with his watch-chain. "You would have been more convincing if you had chosen your examples from our best writers." "From Galsworthy?" I asked, and called to his memory a love scene in *Justice or Strife*, I have forgotten which, in which the quest of realism is carried to a triumphant end, for so strangled are the characters by their emotions that they become far less articulate than parrots. "But does not passion render us speechless?" Lantern asked. "I think it does, Lantern, in real life, but we cannot carry real life into Art." "Why not?" said Lantern. "Because Art, Lantern, is Art, and life is life. In the legend of *The Ring*, the beauty of Brunnhilde rendered Siegfried speechless, but Wagner did not follow the legend, he wrote the

exultant duet, leaving Reyer, an inferior writer, to allow the lovers to stand mutely gazing at each other, like Mr Galsworthy's lovers." "It all depends," said Lantern, "which you prefer—the realistic method or the romantic." "But I do not prefer either, for I do not distinguish between the two, Lantern. Wagner was romantic to the finger tips, he was a realist from the crown of his head to his heels, and the difference between him and Reyer was that one man was a genius and the other—well, a man of talent, if you like." "And you think then," said Lantern, "that if you were to devote yourself to the stage your quest of realism, perhaps I should say truth, would have led you to changes of scene, in which two footmen carry two chairs and a small table on to the stage, whereat the actors continue their discourses." "My dear Lantern, the illusion created by externals, scenes, costumes, lighting, and short sentences is in itself illusory. The best performances of plays and operas are witnessed at rehearsals. Jean de Reszke was never so like Tristan at night as he was in the afternoon when he sang the part in a short jacket, a bowler hat, and an umbrella in his hand. The chain armour and the plumes that he wore at night were but a distraction, setting our thoughts on periods, on the short swords in use in the ninth century in Ireland or in Cornwall, on the comfort or the discomfort of the ships in which the lovers were voyaging, on the absurd nightdress which is the convention that Isolde should appear in, a garment she never wore and which we know to be make-believe. But the hat and feathers that Isolde appears in when she rehearses the part are forgotten the moment she sings; and if I had to choose to see Forbes-Robertson play Hamlet or rehearse Hamlet, I should not hesitate for a moment. The moment he speaks he ceases to be a modern man, but in black hose the illusion ceases, for we forget the Prince of Denmark and remember the mummer. When in a stall in Covent Garden a woman sitting beside me said (when Chaliapin appeared), 'I have been waiting all the evening for Chaliapin, I answered, "And I have been waiting all the evening for Ivan the Terrible.'"

PORTIA'S HOUSEKEEPING

BY JOHN DRINKWATER

We are thrifty of joy in this our modern house;
We probe the springs of joy with uneasy rods,
And shadow the worm in every thrilling bud.
Virtue we know will walk in seedy rags
Of knavery when the better humour fails;
And we know the good man's shadow of desire.

It was not so with Portia. She was simple,
Plain for clear yes or no and good or bad.
Bassanio at Belmont in the evening,

Walking the terrace with Antonio
Was a good man with his friend, and that was all,
Save that his lips were young and masterful.
She had no fine philosophy of sin;
You lied, and that was bad. You gave your word,
And, when time came, redeemed it. A treasure kept
At another's cost was ashes in your hand.
She liked her roses red, her lilies white,
And counted punctual hours in guests a virtue.
Sometimes she thought of a Jew and a young doctor
Standing before the majesty of Venice,
And smiled, without approval, then again
To sow the asters or feed guinea-fowl.
Gratiano, finding ever new Nerissas
Among her maids, she told not to be tedious,
And Gratiano said she was growing dull.
She liked the verse Lorenzo took to writing
And made some tunes herself upon the lute
To fit a little moonlight sequence. When
Launcelot Gobbo stole a goose at Christmas,
She did not say he was an honest fellow,
But rated him and almost sent him off;
He didn't brag about it to his fellows.

She had two children, and said two were enough,
And loved them. She believed there was a God
With an impatient ear for casuistry.
Bassanio had no regrets, but some
Agreed with Gratiano. I do not know.
In Belmont was a lady richly left?

DUST FOR SPARROWS

BY REMY DE GOURMONT

Translated by Ezra Pound

10 1

We frequently hear said of someone who is chasing fortune
precipitate, "I like him, he's a fighter"; in reality Mr So-and-So
is an unscrupulous person who dares risk being gaoled for his
manner of doing business.

1 02

The greater number of skeptics whom I have known were of
the type in fashion in the eighteenth century, who if it thundered
while they were eating ham-omelette on Good Friday would hurl
the plate through the window, saying: "What a fuss about a mere
omelette!

103

If in the midst of nihilism the most complete of ideas needs only a feminine smile or the squalling of an infant to drive every thing out of our heads, why pledge ourselves to reject the arguments of feeling? Is life a problem of mathematics? In our ignorance of all finality is not a pleasant sensation more important to our happiness than an exact piece of reasoning?

104

Borrowers at the end of their tether usually tap people who have helped them before, not only because they count on their kindness or weakness, but because they feel that precedent makes for a servitude.

105

To-day when one presents certain young folk with "the case of the mandarin" one has to go into detailed explanations, for they think they are being made fun of; one ends by posing the question in this form: would you strangle your millionaire bachelor uncle, whose heir you are, if you were sure of not being found out?

106

The most terrible tyrants have been those who had the horror of action, those who would not shed blood themselves; who never laid eyes on their victims, but had them coldly eliminated; as if making mental operations which dealt with abstractions only.

107

The theatricality common among vain, mediocre persons has produced the opposite type which always looks gloomy in public, though it smiles and enjoys itself privately. There are, likewise, others almost professionally happy and pleasant in society, who suddenly turn lugubrious as soon as one stops gushing over them, as soon as they stop trying to please those about them.

108

The men grossest and most tyrannic in intimacy are those who are, from baseness or pusillanimity, most honeyed to strangers.

109

When in certain celebrated novels we observe the intimate relations of mother and daughter, for example, in high European society, we find in their attitudes and words a deal of manner. Is this not simply because we are vexed at seeing them endowed with a culture more finely developed than ours?

110

A life of great emotional satisfactions, even if crossed by fracas and difficulties, is worth more than an existence sacrificed in the chase of a fortune which comes too late, when the vital spring is broken; the solitary man is nothing but an expensive watch, marking inutile hours.

1 11

It is fortunate for women coldly correct and incapable of generous impulse, that they very rarely take count of the intimate contempt included in the homages offered to their respectability. people with souls so dessicated, so lacking in Sap, that to talk with them is like chewing a blotter. [Vide Catullus on dryness. E. P.]

1 13

Strange return to casuistry!

It is odd that in a period whose characteristic is unscrupulous egoism, the favourite subject of many novels is an act contrary to the social pact, for which the committer is tortured by remorse despite the fact that he believed it permissible; despite the fact that he had so judged it in accordance with nature's morality.

1 14

We need believe in nothing which passes the domain of natural intelligence; nevertheless we may suppose the affirmers of a supreme cause nearer verity than the deniers, for the first lot approach more nearly to natural logic and the aspirations of the human soul; at the same time their belief helps to make life less bitter and harsh. There is neither fortune nor moral compensation in life comparable to the tranquillity of the dying of a just man who has confidence in resurrection and in the supreme rewards.

1 15

Generally, men happiest in youth have a gloomy age, for they do not see that with the slide of time the qualities which drew to them the sympathy of others must needs be replenished by new acquisitions.

1 16

The greatest collective suicide was Egypt's, a people which preferred to endure as mummy, rather than to prolong an empire. To spend sums and enormous labour in honouring death is to go pigheadedly contrary to the future, that is, to life.

1 17

People who really, or pretendedly, pay no attention to what they eat are either not elevated, or obstinately refuse to elevate themselves above humanity. The race is voracious in proportion to its savagery and bestiality; as it is tamed it shows tastes and predilections proportional to the level it has reached. The parrot is fussy about its food, the dog has very marked tastes, the monkey is a gourmet, the ass likes thistles, and the pig all he is given or finds.

1 18

In the Genius, the contrary of Cervantes' immortal pair, it is Sancho Panza, not the knight, who commits follies.

119 *

In the case of genius, as with all intelligences, there is a duality resulting from the tensions, minima or maxima, with which he works. Hence comes it that men of extraordinary gifts may seem equal or even inferior to the ordinary, when from disdain or weariness they give way to laziness of mind.

120 *

Great men have a habit, when they arrive at celebrity, of no longer changing their silhouette. Thus they get the satisfaction of contemplating themselves in the very lines of the future statue.

121

Poverty, condition propitious to sanctity, is by even that, a school for character, and, for the great spirit, a spur to audacious action. Without it humanity would drowse in contented mediocrity, and we should have no more heroes either, of thought or of action.

122

Those who establish laws establish also prejudice and the droits du seigneur.

123

As the beautiful has no sex and as the female body is the object of eternal and passionate male praise, it is not extraordinary that for certain feminine eyes there is nothing more beautiful than the holy body of Venus. intimate friendship of a young man and young woman, but they need only exposure, as the two elements of an explosive; they go off at the slightest disturbance.

125

The romantics, nearing thirty, were full of despair, they died young, they committed hari-kari. Why? Probably because they had false ideas about everything, especially about love which they conceived only as a cult or an orgy. A state of perpetual physical and moral instability could lead only to the cemetery or to madness.

126

As the truths have traversed many centuries in the mask of paradox, it is good to affirm that there is a profound difference between commerce and theft. The first spoils the client with his consent, the second consults only its own desires.

127

Man's will is a conscious application of the fatalities which rule the universe: a balance which knows what it does when we forbid it to act automatically.

128

One may have friends whom one does not value; but it is impossible to be friends with certain people whom one respects.

129

When fathers really attend to the education of their sons they will insist on an ethical teaching which implies a virile contempt of life and a strict respect for one's own convictions; seeing that man is by nature a rapacious being, endowed with all the instincts of animality, and that an artificial civilization makes him every day more cunning and dangerous.

PUELLA MEA

BY E. E. CUMMINGS

Harun Omar and Master Hafiz
keep your dead beautiful ladies.
Mine is a little lovelier
than any of your ladies were.
In her perfectest array
my lady, moving in the day,
is a little stranger thing
than crisp Sheba with her king
in the morning wandering.
Through the young and awkward hours
my lady perfectly moving,
through the new world scarce astir
my fragile lady wandering
in whose perishable poise
is the mystery of Spring
(with her beauty more than snow
dexterous and fugitive
my very frail lady drifting
distinctly, moving like a myth
in the uncertain morning, with
April feet like sudden flowers
and all her body filled with May)
—moving in the unskilful day
my lady utterly alive,
to me is a more curious thing
(a thing more nimble and complete)
than ever to Judea's king
were the shapely sharp cunning
and withal delirious feet
of the Princess Salomé
carefully dancing in the noise
of Herod's silence, long ago.
E. E. CUMMINGS 49
If she a little turn her head
i know that i am wholly dead:
nor ever did on such a throat

the lips of Tristram slowly dote,
La beale Isoud whose leman was.
And if my lady look at me
(with her eyes which like two elves
incredibly amuse themselves)
with a look of faerie,
perhaps a little suddenly
(as sometimes the improbable
beauty of my lady will)
—at her glance my spirit shies
rearing (as in the miracle
of a lady who had eyes
which the king's horses might not kill.)
But should my lady smile, it were
a flower of so pure surprise
(it were so very new a flower,
a flower so frail, a flower so glad)
as trembling used to yield with dew
when the world was young and new
(a flower such as the world had
in springtime when the world was mad
and Launcelot spoke to Guenever,
a flower which most heavy hung
with silence when the world was young
and Diarmid looked in Grania's eyes.)
But should my lady's beauty play
at not speaking (sometimes as
it will) the silence of her face
doth immediately make
in my heart so great a noise,
as in the sharp and thirsty blood
of Paris would not all the Troys
of Helen's beauty: never did
Lord Jason (in impossible things
victorious impossibly)
so wholly burn, to undertake
Medea's rescuing eyes; nor he
when swooned the white egyptian day
who with Egypt's body lay.
Lovely as those ladies were
mine is a little lovelier.
And if she speak in her frail way,
it is wholly to bewitch
my smallest thought with a most swift
radiance wherein slowly drift
murmurous things divinely bright;
it is foolingly to smite
my spirit with the lithe free twitch
of scintillant space, with the cool writhe
of gloom truly which syncopate
some sunbeam's skilful fingerings;
it is utterly to lull

with foliate inscrutable
sweetness my soul obedient;
it is to stroke my being with
numbing forests, frolicsome,
fleetly mystical, aroam
with keen creatures of idiom
(beings alert and innocent
very deftly upon which
indolent miracles impinge)
—it is distinctly to confute
my reason with the deep caress
of every most shy thing and mute,
it is to quell me with the twinge
of all living intense things.
Never my soul so fortunate
is (past the luck of all dead men
and loving) as invisibly when
upon her palpable solitude
a furtive occult fragrance steals,
a gesture of immaculate
perfume—whereby (with fear aglow)
my soul is wont wholly to know
the poignant instantaneous fern
whose scrupulous enchanted fronds
toward all things intrinsic yearn,
the immanent subliminal
fern of her delicious voice
(of her voice which alway dwells
beside the vivid magical
impetuous and utter ponds
of dream; and very secret food
its leaves inimitable find
beyond the white authentic springs,
beyond the sweet instinctive wells,
which make to flourish the minute
spontaneous meadow of her mind)
—the vocal fern, alway which feels
the keen ecstatic actual tread
(and thereto perfectly responds)
of all things exquisite and dead,
all living things and beautiful.
(Caliph and king their ladies had
to love them and to make them glad,
when the world was young and mad,
in the city of Bagdad—
mine is a little lovelier
than any of their ladies were.)
Her body is most beauteous,
being for all things amorous
fashioned very curiously
of roses and of ivory.
The immaculate crisp head

is such as only certain dead
and careful painters love to use
for their youngest angels (whose
praising bodies in a row
between slow glories fleetly go.)
Upon a keen and lovely throat
the strangeness of her face doth float,
which in eyes and lips consists
—alway upon the mouth there trysts
curvingly a fragile smile
which like a flower lieth (while
within the eyes is dimly heard
a wistful and precarious bird.)
Springing from fragrant shoulders small,
ardent, and perfectly withal
smooth to stroke and sweet to see
as a supple and young tree,
her slim lascivious arms alight
in skilful wrists which hint at flight
—my lady's very singular
and slenderest hands moreover are
(which as lilies smile and quail)
of all things perfect the most frail.
(Whoso rideth in the tale
of Chaucer knoweth many a pair
of companions blithe and fair;
who to walk with Master Gower
in Confessio doth prefer
shall not lack for beauty there,
nor he that will amaying go
with my lord Boccaccio
whoso knocketh at the door
of Marie and of Maleore
findeth of ladies goodly store
whose beauty did in nothing err.
If to me there shall appear
than a rose more sweetly known,
more silently than a flower,
my lady naked in her hair—
i for those ladies nothing care
nor any lady dead and gone.)
When the world was like a song
heard behind a golden door,
poet and sage and caliph had
to love them and to make them glad
ladies with lithe eyes and long
(when the world was like a flower
Omar Hafiz and Harun
loved their ladies in the moon)
—fashioned very curiously
of roses and of ivory
if naked she appear to me

my flesh is an enchanted tree;
with her lips' most frail parting
my body hears the cry of Spring,
and with their frailest syllable
its leaves go crisp with miracle.
Love!—maker of my lady,
in that alway beyond this
poem or any poem she
of whose body words are afraid
perfectly beautiful is,
forgive these words which i have made.
And never boast your dead beauties,
you greatest lovers in the world!
never boast your beauties dead
who with Grania strangely fled,
who with Egypt went to bed,
whom white-thighed Semiramis
put up her mouth to wholly kiss—
never boast your dead beauties,
mine being unto me sweeter
(of whose shy delicious glance
things which never more shall be,
perfect things of faerie,
are intense inhabitants;
in whose warm superlative
body do distinctly live
all sweet cities passed away—
in her flesh at break of day
are the smells of Nineveh,
in her eyes when day is gone
are the cries of Babylon.)
Diarmid Paris and Solomon,
Omar Harun and Master Hafiz,
to me your ladies are all one—
keep your dead beautiful ladies.
Eater of all things lovely—Time!
upon whose watering lips the world
poises a moment (futile, proud,
a costly morsel of sweet tears)
gesticulates, and disappears
of all dainties which do crowd
gaily upon oblivion
sweeter than any there is one;
to touch it is the fear of rhyme—
in life's very fragile hour
(when the world was like a tale
made of laughter and of dew,
was a flight, a flower, a flame,
was a tendril fleetly curled
upon frailness) used to stroll
(very slowly) one or two
ladies like flowers made,

softly used to wholly move
slender ladies made of dream
(in the lazy world and new
sweetly used to laugh and love
ladies with crisp eyes and frail,
in the city of Bagdad.)

Keep your dead beautiful ladies
Harun Omar and Master Hafiz.

COCK AND HARLEQUIN

Notes Concerning Music

BY JEAN COCTEAU

Translated from the French by Rollo H. Myers

ART is science in the flesh.

The musician opens the cage-door to arithmetic; the draughts
man gives geometry its freedom.

A work of art must satisfy all the Muses—that is what I call
“Proof by nine.”

A masterpiece is a game of chess won “check-mate.”

A YoUNG MAN MUST NoT INVEST IN SAFE SECURITIES.

Royal families.—Only a sense of hierarchy permits of sound
judgement. Amongst works of art which leave us unmoved, there
are works which count; one may smile at Gounod's Faust—but it
is a masterpiece; one may revolt against Picasso's aesthetic, but
recognize its intrinsic value. It is this sense of quality which
relates artists belonging to absolutely opposite schools.

Emotion resulting from a work of art is only of value when it is
not obtained by sentimental blackmail.

In art every value which can be proved is vulgar.

Truth is too naked; she does not inflame men.

A sentimental scruple which prevents us from speaking the whole
truth makes us represent Venus hiding her sex with her hand.

But truth points to her sex with her hand.

Every “Long live So-and-So” involves a “Down with So-and
So.” One must have the courage to say this “Down with So-and
So” or be convinced of eclecticism.

Eclecticism is fatal to admiration as well as to injustice. But
in art, it is a kind of injustice to be just.

It is hard to deny anything, above all a noble work of art. But
every sincere affirmation involves a sincere negation.

Beethoven is irksome in his developments, but not Bach, because
Beethoven develops the form and Bach the idea.

Beethoven says: “This pen-holder contains a new pen; there
is a new pen in this pen-holder; the pen in this pen-holder is new”
—or “Marquise, vos beaux yeux, et cetera.”

Bach says: “This pen-holder contains a new pen in order that
I may dip it in the ink and write, etcetera,” or “Marquise, vos
beaux yeux me font mourir d'amour, et cet amour, et cetera.”

There lies the difference.

There is a moment when every work in the process of being created benefits from the glamour attaching to uncompleted sketches. "Don't touch it any more!" cries the amateur. It is THEN THAT THE TRUE ARTIST TAKES HIS CHANCE.

SENSES. The ear repudiates but can tolerate certain kinds of music which, if transferred to the sphere of the nose, would oblige us to run away.

The bad music which superior folk despise is agreeable enough. What is disagreeable is their good music.

Sculpture, so neglected on account of the current contempt for form and mass in favour of the shapeless, is undoubtedly one of the noblest arts. To begin with, it is the only one which obliges us to move round it.

That bird-catcher and scare-crow over there is a conductor.

The creative artist must always be partly man and partly woman, and the woman part is almost always unbearable.

The public asks questions. They ought to be answered by works, not manifestos.

The beautiful looks easy. That is what the public scorns.

Even when you blame, only be concerned with what is first-class.

Impressionist music is outdone by a certain American dance which I saw at the Casino de Paris.

This is what the dance was like. The American band accompanied it on banjos and thick nickel tubes. On the right of the little black-coated group there was a barman of noises under a gilt pergola loaded with bells, triangles, boards, and motorcycle horns. With these he fabricated cocktails, adding from time to time a dash of cymbals, all the while rising from his seat, posturing, and smiling vacuously.

Mr Pilcer in evening dress, thin and rouged, and Mlle Gaby Deslys, like a big ventriloquist's doll, with a china complexion, flaxen hair, and a gown of ostrich feathers, danced to this hurricane of rhythm and beating of drums a sort of tame catastrophe which left them quite intoxicated and blinded under the glare of six anti-aircraft search-lights. The house was on its feet to applaud, roused from its inertia by this extraordinary turn which, compared to the madness of Offenbach, is what a tank would be by the side of an 1870 state-carriage.

To defend Wagner because Saint-Saëns attacks him is too simple.

We must cry "Down with Wagner!" together with Saint-Saëns.

That requires real courage. -

I am not attacking modern German music. Schoenberg is a master; all our musicians as well as Stravinsky owe something to him, but Schoenberg is essentially a blackboard musician.

The German public has a strong stomach which it stuffs with heterogeneous nourishment which is respectfully absorbed but not digested.

In France this nourishment is refused; but there are four or five stomachs which select and digest better than anywhere else in

the world.

Germany is the type of an intellectual democracy, France of an intellectual monarchy. -

With us a young musician from the beginning meets with opposition, in other words, a stimulant. In Germany he finds ears. The longer they are the more they listen. He is taken up, and academized, and that is the end of him.

We must be clear about that misunderstood phrase, "German influence." France had her pockets full of seeds and, carelessly, spilt them all about her; the German picked up the seeds, carried them off to Germany and planted them in a chemically-prepared soil from whence there grew a monstrous flower without scent. It is not surprising that the maternal instinct made us recognize the poor spoilt flower and prompted us to restore to it its true shape and smell.

Satie acquired a distaste for Wagner in Wagnerian circles, in the very heart of the Rose-Croix. He warned Debussy against Wagner. "Be on your guard," he said. "A property' tree is not convulsed because somebody comes on to the stage." That is the whole aesthetic of Pelléas.

Satie does not pay much attention to painters, and does not read the poets, but he likes to live where life ferments; he has a flair for good inns.

Debussy established once for all the Debussy atmosphere. Satie evolves. Each of his works, intimately connected with its predecessor, is nevertheless distinct and lives a life of its own. They are like a new kind of pudding—a surprise—and a deception for those who expect one always to tread the same piece of ground. The impressionists feared bareness, emptiness, silence. Silence is not necessarily a hole; you must use silence, instead of using a stop-gap of vague noises.

Black Shadow.—Black silence. Not violet silence, interspersed with violet shadows.

We may soon hope for an orchestra where there will be no caressing strings. Only a rich choir of wood, brass, and percussion. I should not be averse from substituting for the cult of St Cecilia that of St Polycarpe.

It would be a fine thing for a musician to compose for a mechanical organ, a veritable sound-machine. We should then hear properly employed the rich resources of this apparatus which are now lavished, haphazard, upon hackneyed tunes.

The public, accustomed to redundancy, disregards works that are terse.

To the musical public terseness signifies emptiness, and stuffing prodigality.

The public only takes up yesterday as a weapon with which to castigate to-day.

The indolence of the public: its armchair and its stomach. The public is ready to take up no matter what new game so long as you don't change it, when once it has learned the rules. Hatred of the creator is hatred of him who alters the rules of the game.

PUBLICs. Those who defend to-day by making use of yester day, and who anticipate to-morrow (one per cent).

Those who defend to-day by destroying yesterday, and who will deny to-morrow (four per cent).

Those who imagine that to-day is a mistake, and make an appointment for the day-after-to-morrow (twelve per cent).

Those of the day-before-yesterday who defend yesterday in order to prove that to-day exceeds legitimate bounds (twenty per cent).

Those who have not yet learnt that art is continuous and believe that art stopped yesterday in order to go on again, perhaps, to-morrow (sixty per cent).

Those who are equally oblivious of the Day-before-Yesterday, Yesterday, and To-day (one hundred per cent).

To Please, and to Retain One's Merit.—If an artist yields to the public's overtures of peace, he is beaten.

A favourite phrase of the public is: "I don't see what that's meant to be."

The public wants to understand first and feel afterwards.

A fall makes peoples laugh. The mechanism of falling plays an important part in causing the laughter which greets a new work.

The public, not having followed the curve which leads up to this work, stumbles suddenly from where it was standing down on to the work which it is now seeing or hearing. Consequently a fall takes place, and laughter.

Music is the only art which the masses will allow not to be like something else. And yet good music is music which has some resemblance.

One does not blame an epoch; one congratulates oneself on not having belonged to it.

Of course Wagner is "good" and Debussy is "good"—we are only discussing what is "good." Needless to say that Saint-Saëns, Bruneau, and Charpentier are very bad.

Pelléas is another example of music to be listened to with one's face in one's hands. All music which has to be listened to through the hands is suspect. Wagner is typically music which is listened to through the hands.

One cannot get lost in a Debussy mist as one can in a Wagner fog, but it is not good for one.

Too many miracles are expected of us; I consider myself very fortunate if I have been able to make a blind man hear.

FRAGMENTS OF IGOR STRAVINSKY AND THE RUSSIAN BALLET

And the flower-Maidens! Amongst the most recent flower Maidens, the most maidenly and the most flowery, I class the Russian Ballet.

I had a presentiment that I should have to find an excuse for my enthusiasm for this Barnum, a last scruple before clearing out "on the quiet."

It was in 1910. Nijinsky was dancing the Spectre de la Rose. Instead of going to see the piece, I went to wait for him in the

wings. There it was really very good. After embracing the young girl the spectre of the rose hurls himself out of the window . and comes to earth amongst the stage-hands who throw water in his face and rub him down like a boxer. What a combination of grace and brutality! I shall always hear that thunder of applause; I shall always see that young man, smeared with grease-paint, gasping and sweating, pressing his heart with one hand and holding on with the other to the scenery, or else fainting on a chair. Afterwards, having been smacked and doused and shaken he would return to the stage, and smile his acknowledgmentS.

LE SACRE DU PRINTEMPS

The *Sacre du Printemps* was given in May 1913 in a new theatre, untarnished by time, too comfortable and too cold for a public used to emotions at close quarters in the warmth of red velvet and gold. I do not for a moment think that the *Sacre* would have met with a more polite reception on a less pretentious stage; but this luxurious theatre seemed, at first glance, symbolic of the misunderstanding which was confronting a decadent public with a work full of strength and youth. A tired public, reposing amidst Louis XVI garlands, Venetian gondolas, luxurious divans, and cushions of an orientalism for which the Russian Ballet must be held responsible. Under such conditions one digests, as it were, in a hammock, dozing; the really New is driven away like a fly; it is disturbing.

Let us recall the theme of the *Sacre*.

FIRST TABLEAU. The prehistoric youth of Russia are engaged in springtide games and dances; they worship the earth and the wise elder reminds them of the sacred rites.

SECONd TABLEAU. These simple men believe that the sacrifice of a young girl, chosen from amongst all her peers, is necessary in order that Spring may recommence. She is left alone in the forest; the ancestors come out of the shadows like bears, and form a circle. They inspire the chosen one with the rhythm of a long drawn-out convulsion. When she falls dead, the ancestors draw near, receive her body and raise it towards heaven. This theme, so simple, so devoid of symbolism, to-day seems to hold a symbol. I see in it the prelude to the war.

Let us now return to the theatre in the Avenue Montaigne, while we wait for the conductor to rap his desk and the curtain to go up on one of the noblest events in the annals of art. The audience behaved as it ought to; it revolted straight away. People laughed, boo-ed, hissed, imitated animal noises, and possibly would have tired themselves out before long, had not the crowd of aesthetes and a handful of musicians, carried away by their excessive zeal, insulted and even roughly handled the public in the loges. The uproar degenerated into a free fight. Standing up in her loge, her diadem awry, the old Countess de P. flourished her fan and shouted, scarlet in the face, "It's the first time for sixty years that anyone's dared to make a fool of me." The good lady was sincere; she

thought there was some mystification.

At two o'clock in the morning Stravinsky, Nijinsky, Diaghilev, and I piled into a taxi and drove to the Bois de Boulogne. No one spoke; the night was fresh and agreeable. We recognized the first trees by the smell of the acacias. When we had reached the Lakes, Diaghilev, enveloped in opossum furs, began to mutter in Russian; I felt Stravinsky and Nijinsky listening, and when the driver lit the lamps I saw that there were tears on the impresario's face. He went on muttering, slowly and indefatigably. "What is it?" I asked. "Pushkin." Again there was a long silence; then Diaghilev stammered out a short sentence, and the emotion of my two companions seemed so acute that I could not refrain from interrupting in order to know the reason. "It is hard to translate," said Stravinsky, "really very hard; too Russian . . . too Russian. It means, roughly, *Veux-tu faire un tour aux îles*. Yes, that's it; it is a very Russian expression, because, you know, in our country one goes to the islands in the same way as we are going to the Bois de Boulogne to-night, and it was in going to the islands that we conceived the *Sacre du Printemps*." It was the first time the Scandal had been alluded to. We came back at dawn. You cannot imagine the state of softness and nostalgia of these men, and whatever Diaghilev may have done since, I shall never forget his great wet face, in the cab, reciting Pushkin in the Bois de Boulogne.

THREE POEMS

BY WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

JANUARY

Again I reply to the triple winds
running chromatic fifths of derision
outside my window:
Play louder,
you will not succeed.
I am bound more to my sentences
the more you batter at me
to follow you.
And the wind,
as before, fingers perfectly
its derisive music.

APPROACH OF WINTER

The half stripped trees
struck by a wind together,
bending all,
the leaves flutter drily
and refuse to let go
or driven like hail
stream bitterly out to one side
and fall where the hard

carmine of the salvias—
like no leaf that ever was—
edges the bare garden.

WINTER TREES

All the complicated details
of the attiring and
the disattiring are completed
A liquid moon
moves gently among
the long branches.
Thus having prepared their buds
against a sure winter
the wise trees
stand sleeping in the cold.

SEVEN SAYINGS

BY KHLIL GIBRAN

I

I said to Life, "I would hear Death speak," and Life raised her voice a little higher and said, "You hear it now."

II

My friend, you and I shall remain strangers unto life and unto one another and each unto himself, until the day when you shall speak and I shall listen deeming your voice my own voice, and when I shall stand before you and think myself standing before a mirror.

III

When God threw me, a pebble, into this wondrous Lake I disturbed its surface with countless circles. But when I reached its depth I became very still.

IV

You are truly a forgiver when you forgive murderers who never spill blood, thieves who never steal, liars who utter no falsehood.

V

Crucified One, you are crucified upon my breast, and the nails that pierce your hands pierce the walls of my heart. And to-morrow when a stranger passes by this Golgotha, he will not know that two bled here. He will deem it the blood of one man.

VI

Great beauty holds us, but a beauty still greater frees us even from itself.

VII

Every thought I have imprisoned in expression I must free by my deeds.

ITALIAN LETTER

December, 1920

THE utter lack of any definite character or style in contemporary letters cannot give us the right to refrain from concerning ourselves in the matter. The tentatives of the last twenty years have led to nothing definite, but they have certainly marked a renewal of thought and conscience or, to speak more modestly, have at least marked the road for such a renewal. Never has there been such an enormous "liquidation" of the past as in this period. Actually, the triad of the last century has been surpassed more in manner than in substance." Carducci, and, even more, Pascoli and d'Annunzio, live still in the new generation; but the younger writers have tried resolutely to free themselves from this inheritance, though often without success.

Their principal merit is that they have definitely felt that Carducci's eloquence, d'Annunzio's aesthetics, and Pascoli's crepuscularity are embodied in forms which have already given all they can give—and, if they are over-arrogant in claiming to have surpassed even the inspiration of these poets, and certainly belittle them unreasonably, in this same fallacious belief is to be found a proof *ab absurdis* of that critical passion which is a really new feature, and which eventually becomes the form, in the philosophic sense of the word, of a new art.

If these works lack that new content of love which is the usual manifestation of the new in poetry, a provident hatred unknown to the preceding generation has at least been created.

The new Italian poets have no affirmative powers, but they have learnt to be negative with distinction, and they use this power courageously against themselves, raising endless objections to their own work: indeed, by their zeal in tearing the flesh from the bones of their poetry they may be said to have annihilated it completely, or at least to have succeeded in reducing it to its most naked and primitive elements. Thus we have Palazzeschi, musician, denying all melodious sound; and Soffici, painter, self-deprived of colour.

* See the recent anthology of Italian poetry (*Poeti d'oggi*—di P. Papinie P. Pancrazi, Valleschi, Via Ricasoli 8, Florence).

Of this disintegration the most obvious result is the abolition of all acknowledged literary distinctions; and at the first stroke, that between prose and poetry.

The writers of the first ten years, who, like Gozzano, remained true to poetry in verse, themselves raised precisely the most formidable objection to this traditional style. Using it with irony, they sang its requiem.

The historian of to-day, having the work of these twenty years to classify, finds before him the fragment and the lyric discourse;

the one already out of date; the other in full flower; the first: precious relics kept carefully apart, lifted, pure and transparent between two fingers, from the gangrene of the past; the second: an endeavour to establish a relation between these ruins, without however, rebuilding in the original architecture.

The problem which our generation has set itself is to discover a new art in which the dominating part shall no longer be the theme, subdivided into its objective details, but rather the breath and lyric progression. The facts of this progression are touched, merely, or suggested, and not, as formerly, unfolded to a conclusion.

However that may be, the greater part of the problems of our Sturm und Drang, even those which may seem the most antithetic, are attached to this desperate passion for the purely lyrical. Our generation has hereby suffered the singular adventure of those futurists who imprisoned themselves in the force of their love of liberty; while the opposite movement may be traced to the same impulse. The neo-classic restorers see in parole libere, and indeed in almost all the expressions of the literary activity of the later nineteenth century, a more or less painful parenthesis, interrupting the Leopardian and Manzonian tradition which had already conquered, in a definite and final manner, verse and forme chiuse; and have found salvation possible only in collecting the heritage of these two great men in their lyric prose. But between these two extremes, futurism and anti-futurism, the other more or less recognizable tendencies of the new school still spring from the same root. This craving for lyric nudity explains, for instance, the poverty of crepuscular intimacy, the sensuality of the Neo parnassians, the rocky anfractuosity which we associate with Jahier, and the rich luminosity of Linati. Were we treating only of a mental substrata the matter would be interesting as a philosophic problem rather than as art itself, but something must already exist in poetic sensibility before we can speak of any result. Reading consecutively a specimen of the work of a writer of each period, the impression received is one of two ages, more than estranged, absolutely opposed to each other.

It is too early to say how much of the Parnassian remains in the new art form, but one can mark the influence exercised on the new style up to the present, at least in its later dispositions, in the exasperated love of detachment, of renunciation, not material only, but of inspiration itself. There is a feeling for severity almost hieratic; in the more limpid pages no mistiness supervenes; and one is sometimes even reminded of the oracular odes of the archaic age of letters. The writing is weighted with a singular religious sense never transformed into irony, all fervour suppressed for the better exposition of the austerity, sometimes the hardness, of the rite.

So one may say that the new movement, if it has not yet attained definite aesthetic results, has certainly regained a solid ethic

character, and a moral decorum to be respected; hence the aversion from that facile literature which the fiction of comedy of to-day has carried into the suffocating realms of charlatanry: hence the growth of irony and terseness.

We also find works of another kind, of austere comportment, enlivened with a sort of humour, which, if not conspicuous for critical severity, and sometimes childishly paternal in tone, are pronouncements significant at least in our country inclined to gossip and provincialism.

By which I do not mean to indicate a contentment we are far from feeling. If instead of pursuing the further lyric and critical course of the above indications, we have preferred a position of careful ascertaining, diligent in the interests of literature, and selecting only small and slight points of worth, it is because this enterprise has more solid foundations and great possibilities. For the rest our dissatisfaction remains. Possibly the new poets will have need of all those present-day elements which we have discussed, and of that sacred spirit which is of all time.
ENzo FERRIERI

THE CHINLESS AGE

LEDA. By Aldous Huxley. 8vo. 80 pages. George H. Doran Company. New York.

LEDA is a book of adolescence; its author recognizes this fact explicitly, going so far as to quote definitions from the Herd Instinct of the invaluable Mr Trotter. The adolescent suffers from that instability of mind "produced by the mental conflict forced upon man by his sensitiveness to herd suggestion on the one hand and to experience on the other." A chinless age, Aldous Huxley goes on to call the period (he uses his own words this time); an age feebly skeptical, inefficient, profoundly unhappy. In other words it is the stage at which one measures the traditional precepts into which one has been educated against the immoral realities of experience; depending on which force proves the stronger, one becomes idealist or realist.

A third outcome is possible, and up till the present Mr Huxley has chosen this one. It consists in preserving and refining the struggle instead of searching for any solution thereof; in other words it consists in prolonging adolescence indefinitely. Laforgue recommends this path to the artist (*Nous, poètes, restons des enfants de quinze ans, toujours pubères*); the theory has even been advanced that genius in general is a state of continued puberty. At any rate genius has this much in common with adolescence; that they are both regions imperfectly explored, and this despite a myriad of Jean-Christophes; despite an almost equal number of Penrods and

of painstaking caricatures of youth in English boarding schools. Of the two puberty is especially difficult to explore because it is new territory. It is a region created by modern education, which lengthened so tragically the period between the first rumbles of the voice, between the first faint doubts about God, and the time when one's ideals are lopped finally into the forms of useful citizenship. Aldous Huxley, always impeccably the modern, has undertaken to write the Baedeker of this region. More than that he is himself the explorer. He documents his poems out of his own experience; impersonality is only one of his poses. -

There are times when the pose wears thin. Especially this is true in passages from the best of his longer poems. He offers *Soles Occidere et Redire Possunt* as a day from the life of a dead friend. To put it baldly, some of the details are not the sort of things one knows about a friend. They impress one rather as the fragments of an autobiography; Confessions of the Rousseau type; sometimes in bad taste and proud of the fact. It seems a shabby trick to attribute them to the unretorting dead.

And yet the courtesy or discourtesy of the poem is not a case in point. Its sole important feature is the fact that Mr Huxley has used the incomplete gestures of adolescence as material for a work of art. At one place the poem may seem a study in immature sexual psychology, mentioning always:

"The unseen woman sitting there behind
The door, making her ceaseless slow appeal
To all that prowls and growls in the caves beneath
The libraries and parlours of the mind."

At another point it is a chronicle of survivals from childhood; of such tricks as walking with shortened or lengthened steps to avoid the cracks between the stones. Or the poem may burst into a prayer to the ideal in terms of the disagreeable; a sort of *O Lord Deliver Us* running somewhat in this fashion:

"From the quotidianity of this city, from quarrels over breakfast at eight-ten and the newspaper and the tube at eight-thirty; from the dirty dishes of this city, from sex and excrement and soiled linen, may some Christ die to save us, and me, forever and ever, Amen."

When he is complaining or mocking Mr Huxley can rise to real heights of bombast; at such times he writes good mouth-filling stuff with a little of the Elizabethan spirit, but with more acidity. His adolescence was even more than usual a period of destructive criticism; looking at the world from beneath, he played the Scapin to perfection. And yet his own views are separated only by an imaginary line from those he ridicules. There is one place (among a number of excellent prose poems dedicated to Beauty) where Mr Huxley attempts to draw up an independent aesthetic; it

echoes a little banally against its surroundings:

"I desire no Paphian cloister of pink monks. Rather a rosy Brotherhood of Common Life, eating, drinking; marrying and given in marriage; taking and taken in adultery; reading, thinking, and perhaps when thinking fails, feeling immeasurably more subtly, sometimes perhaps creating."

This is his manifesto; it has the same value as all other manifestoes from the Unanimiste to that of the ninety learned German professors.

It is for his satires, then, that he is to be valued, rather than for any gropings toward a philosophy; for his prose poems as long as they are satires; for *Soles Occidere et Redire Possunt* as long as it remains a criticism and a complaint. Most of his other work must be disregarded. Indeed to read Mr Huxley intelligently is a process of elimination. He is erudite and inclined to be imitative; one must begin by striking out the parts where he has given way to these weaknesses. Indeed one can draw up a list of desirable excisions, beginning with the part of his work that was written by the dead hand of Jules Laforgue, and ending with the solitary poem in which he collaborates unconsciously with D. H. Lawrence.

Even the title poem can be eliminated by such tests; it is pompously classical, and shows signs of being written with the tongue in the cheek. And yet whatever the tests that one may apply, there are always a few pages—five, ten, twenty, it does not matter—that definitely survive. And this is the thing that distinguishes Mr Huxley. Apply the same tests to the others of his generation, and their whole production is apt to be eliminated.

The almost universal judgement on Leda has been that of "promising." "Perhaps its greatest value," says the critic of the *London Mercury*, "lies in the indication it gives that Mr Huxley's next poem may be twice as good." At this point I disagree. The volume is an achievement, not a promise; the part of it that survives the test is able to stand by itself. On the other hand, one is in the greatest uncertainty as to what Mr Huxley's mind may next bring forth. He is a man that works by precedents. Up to the present time, he has been able to follow the sure examples of Rimbaud and Laforgue; here their guidance ceases. Rimbaud gave up writing at the age of twenty and Laforgue died exhausted at twenty-seven. Mr Huxley also can die or cease to write; it is more probable, however, that he will persist. But in what vein? His own adolescence must have come to an end; he can go on developing his memories of it, or he can strike out in a totally new direction. In any case Leda stands as an obituary of that adolescence.

MALCOLM COWLEY

MR SHERWOOD ANDERSON'S AMERICA
POOR WHITE. By Sherwood Anderson. 12mo. 37/
pages. B. W. Huebsch. New York.

MR ANDERSON, like Deukalion, creates his man from a clod of earth—"found in a little hole of a town stuck on a mud bank on the western shore of the Mississippi." Hugh McVey as a boy followed his father listlessly about the town, sweeping saloons, cleaning outhouses, or slept beside him on the river bank with the smell of the fish upon them and the flies about them. A New England woman, the wife of the station-agent, took Hugh and taught him "to keep his naturally indolent body moving and his clouded sleepy mind fixed on definite things." After her departure his awakened will forced him into activity. "He arose from his chair and walked up and down the station platform. Each time as he lifted one of his long feet and set it slowly down a special little effort had to be made. . . . 'If I do not move and keep moving I'll become like father, like all of the people about here' Hugh said to himself." His will carried his body to Bidwell, Ohio, and his mind through the laborious processes of inventing machines for planting cabbages and loading hay; the industrial expansion of the town bore him on to wealth and a kind of distinction. There Hugh sticks, and Mr Anderson brings up his reserves in the person of Clara Butterworth, daughter of a magnate of the town who has made money out of Hugh's inventions. Clara's story is one of sexual awakening. Through her hoydenish girlhood on her father's farm, her course at a co-educational college, and her association with her masculine friend Kate Chancellor she remains dissatisfied. It is her will which forces Hugh into marriage and eventually into cohabitation with her. Mr Anderson does not tie on a romantic conclusion as in Windy MacPherson's Son. He leaves Hugh and Clara incomplete and spiritually groping, part of

"That life, whose dumb wish is not missed
If birth proceeds, if things subsist;
The life of plants, and stones, and rain."

In this severely elemental conception there is a certain grandeur. Hugh McVey is a distinct human type—a sort of sub-conscious Lincoln. Even when his individual story ceases to interest us he remains a symbol of the country itself in its industrial progress and spiritual impotence. Hugh McVey, the physically overgrown, almost idiotic boy, is the microcosm of that Middle West in the early 'eighties which Mr Anderson knows so well and sketches so laconically.

"In all the towns of mid-western America it was a time of waiting. The country having been cleared and the Indians driven away into a vast distant place spoken of vaguely as the West, the Civil War having been fought and won, the minds of men were

turned in upon themselves. The soul and its destiny was spoken of openly on the streets. Robert Ingersoll came to Bidwell to speak in Terry's Hall, and after he had gone the question of the divinity of Christ for months occupied the minds of the citizens. The ministers preached sermons on the subject, and in the evening it was talked about in stores. Every one had something to say. Even Charley Mook, who dug ditches, and who stuttered so that not a half dozen people in town could understand him, expressed his opinion."

And Hugh McVey, harnessing his mind to problems of mechanical invention and solving them by a power he does not understand, typifies the spirit of industrial pioneering in all its crude force. "A vast energy seemed to come out of the breast of earth and infect the people. Thousands of the most energetic men of the Middle States wore themselves out in forming companies, and when the companies failed, immediately formed others. In the fast-growing towns, men who were engaged in organizing companies representing a capital of millions lived in houses thrown hurriedly together by carpenters who, before the time of the great awakening, were engaged in building barns. Without music, without poetry, without beauty in their lives or impulses, a whole people, full of the native energy and strength of lives lived in a new land, rushed pell-mell into a new age."

The pattern of Mr Anderson's book is determined even in its detail by this fundamental conception. He makes use of the abundant material which Winesburg, Ohio revealed without diminishing, and each minor character and episode contributes to the picture as a whole. Sarah Shephard with her school-mistressly formula: "Show them that you can do perfectly the task given you to do, and you will be given a chance at a larger task"—what is she but the spirit of New England, brooding on the vast abyss of the Middle West, and making it pregnant? Harley Parsons with his boast "I have been with a Chinese woman, and an Italian, and with one from South America—I'm going back and I'm going to make a record. Before I get through I'm going to be with a woman of every nationality on earth, that's what I'm going to do," what is he but an ironic incarnation of our national destiny? Joe Wainsworth, the harness maker who in warfare, against machinery and machine-made goods kills his assistant—he is the ghost of the past attacking the present. Smoky Pete, the blacksmith who shouts out to the fields the scandal he dares not utter on Main Street—he is the true spirit of American prophecy, the Jeremiah of Ohio. These and countless other figures show Mr Anderson's easy mastery of Middle Western life, and his power to touch it with significance. He has made his story a Pilgrim's Progress, peopled with characters as actual and as full of meaning as those of the immortal allegory.

Mr Anderson's formula is realism, enlarged and made significant by symbolism. It is the formula of Frank Norris—but Mr Ander

son's realism is more seizing and his symbolism more sustained, while his emphasis is far less. It is in lack of emphasis that Mr Anderson's novel falls below the effect of his short stories. Poor White does not end—it merely stops. Even so it may be regarded as an advance on Mr Anderson's earlier novels. No ending is better than a false one, and perhaps any emphasis would be misplaced in Mr Anderson's cosmos—or chaos.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

SANDBURG : A PSYCHIATRIC CURIOSITY

SMOKE AND STEEL. By Carl Sandburg. 12mo. 268 pages. Harcourt, Brace and Howe. New York.

EITHER Carl Sandburg is dead or he is very sick. Some of us, who annunciated this great poet when his epiphanal accents crashed out in Chicago, now look up from the useless pages of Smoke and Steel with a gasp of astonished grief. Is this the latest cry of our divine ballyhoo-poet, whom we have seen and heard so often just outside the circus-tent-of-life, crudely and eloquently ranting of such God-awful splendours within? Yes, it is, I suppose: although the cry might have been shrieked by a gas-light gamin hired to assassinate Sandburg, so completely is it murder. As a cry which is variously yodelled one hundred and ninety-three times (I refer to the number of poems in the book; and each has the most inspiring title), it is mostly characterized by the sententious garrulity which makes nine-tenths of Whitman impossible to a man of any taste. The rest of the cry, with some perfectly astounding exceptions, is what Americans call an encore. Briefly, tragically, as a single long ullulation, it lacks the certitude of genius. Surely one who has wept and raved over the true Sandburg may be permitted to repudiate the false; in a spirit of hope, of passionate petition, may even be permitted to name the hell he has credulously blundered into. For the poet is not dead. He is merely whoring after alien gods. And that sort of thing, in the special meaning of the allusion, is a mental disease.

In charity, the disease is nystagmus—which is nothing more or less than oscillation of the eyeballs, or dizziness. It is produced in the world of aviation by a tight spiral or a tail-spin. In the world of literature—in Sandburg's world—it is produced by the centrifugal stresses of asinine adulation. The result is the same in both worlds: neither aviator nor poet can fly straight until he recovers. It was, it is the conventional practice of critics, in the absence of sound appreciation, to acclaim each succeeding manifestation of inferiority as the best thing Sandburg has ever done. Such unfair acclamations have turned the poet's head. Such suggestions of universal merit, actuating his mental ailerons and kicking over his spiritual rudder, have inevitably thrown him into a tail-spin which has disturbed the fluid of his semi-circular canals and produced a really dangerous condition of nystagmus. So

much for the nature of the disease.

The symptoms are absolutely appalling. Sandburg has lost (at least temporarily) the one and only thing which makes him great the ability to determine when he has written something good. He now apparently believes that everything he writes is a poem. Often—such is the extremity of his trouble—he seems to think he has written poetry when he makes out a little list of a few things he has seen here and there in the street. Moreover, he appears to write his stuff on an eight-hour working day. Lost in smoke, confounded by steel, he has reduced to a mechanical effort the gestures necessary to make a poem. He imitates Gary, and turns his product out on a quantity basis. It would appear foolish to ask him what he has done with that rare conception of quality which integrated the earlier expressions of his genius. At one time he actually phrased the spirit of commercial America. Now he is himself that spirit. He is a factory hand in the very hell he abominates. I simply refuse to say any more of these heart-breaking things than are necessary to get my little idea across. My idea may help. It may not. Crashes frequently occur before the victim of nystagmus has time to level out and get his ship's nose safely back on the horizon.

Only two years ago Sandburg might have posed for Dardé's Faune. Then, in one of his most acceptable moods, he apotheosized that charming brute—so cruelly swift with rapacious hands, so selfishly insistent—cynical, hard, disillusioned—instinct with a spinous and hairy masculinity which had just enough childish innocence in it to make his flesh fatally attractive—a fantastic old young god smelling like a goat, reeking with strange lusts, remembering unspeakable things, full of pagan perspicacity, smiling at death, a matrix himself of abundant and beautiful life. Such was at least one aspect of this multi-splendoured poet then. Only one out of many. And now—
God of Paul Dardé, resuscitate!
ARTHUR WILSON

JACAPONE DA TODI

JACOPONE DA TODI, POET AND MYSTIC—1228-1306: A SPIRITUAL BIOGRAPHY. By Evelyn Underhill. With a selection from the spiritual songs—the Italian text translated into English verse by Mrs. Theodore Beck. 52 / pages. E. P. Dutton and Company. New York.

THE life of Jacapone da Todi is a highly romantic, dramatic narrative; it is a background for religious poetry as beautiful as any that we have; more than anything else, however, it is as the name indicates, a spiritual biography. Of the conspicuously romantic episode of Jacopone's conversion, too much, perhaps, has

been made. It is not more romantic nor dramatic than each of the successive phases of his life as a friar and scarcely more than alluded to by Miss Underhill, the tragedy is one of which he, himself, has seen fit not to speak at all. At the age of thirty-seven or eight—in one of the years between 1265 and 1267—he was married to Vanna, daughter of Bernardino di Guidone of the lesser Umbrian aristocracy, of a house Ghibbeline in politics as was his own. The ideal wife he has told us, should be “beautiful and healthy, well-bred and sweet-natured. She must have a large dowry and must not have a nagging tongue.” We infer that Vanna was the personification of his requirements with perhaps the exception of the dowry and the fact that she was desirous of living a life of religious seclusion. Accommodating herself outwardly to Ser Jacomo's requirements, she had accompanied him to the home of an acquaintance on the occasion of a marriage festival and during the progress of the ball, was dancing on a balcony when the balcony fell and she was mortally hurt. When her injuries were being cared for, it was discovered that beneath her magnificent garments, she wore a shirt of hair. “Life he must have”: says his biographer; “he needed its colour, its perpetual calls to action, its romance. Now his temporal life lay in ruins around him: but through the rents in its wall, eternal life was suddenly disclosed.” “Mystics,” she says, “do not spring full-grown from the wreck of their worldly careers. They pass for the most part through a period of spiritual childhood and hard education, marked by the child's intensity of feeling and distorted scale of values, its abounding vitality, dramatic instinct and lack of control . . . In this, Jacopone was true to type.” He had led the life of the intellect for nearly forty years. “When others went to Mass or to hear a sermon, he preferred to stay at home and have a good dinner and a little music.” From having thus deferred to the dictates of intellect and sense, he now became wildly ascetic—subject on the one hand to wild states of rapturous adoration, recalling in exuberance the “French-like rejoicings” into which St Francis is said to have broken out, and on the other hand to “profound reactions of self-hatred and despairing grief,” going so far beyond the requirements of convent piety that he was refused admittance to the Convent of San Fortunato at Todi.

We do not know where the years were spent until 1278; we do know that the “superficial character of mere physical austerities” had at this time become clear to him; he found that he had “but exchanged one kind of wealth for another.” He had achieved a conquest over the senses; he now felt it to be essential that he should make a complete sacrifice of his personal will and with the end in view of subjecting himself to the uncongenial restraints of convent life, he again sought admittance to the Convent of San Fortunato and was received.

His entrance into the convent was no more a matter of satisfaction to the friars than it was to him for “although the Spiritual party and those who followed the relaxed rule, had alike accepted

Holy Poverty theoretically, as theoretically, ordinary Christians have accepted the Sermon on the Mount," they felt "the continuance and success of the primitive Franciscan methods" to be a reproach to them; nor was Jacopone, we read, "easily transformed into the pattern friar." Contemplation was not in accord with his disposition. "Fasting and prayer were welcome—indeed, he loved them to excess—but it was long before he learned to accept with meekness the small mortifications of daily life." The poem on impatience cited by Miss Underhill in this connection shows how difficult for him was the conquest of hot temper and self-esteem. (Lauda xxviii)

OF IMPATIENCE, WHICH BRINGS ALL OUR GAINS TO NOTHING

I laboured long, I strove with might and main:
And yet I cannot keep the good I gain.
Yea, I have been a monk full many a year,
Have suffered much, and wandered far and near,
Have sought and found—yet held not,—till I fear
That nothing can I show for all my pain.
In calm retreats my truest joy I found;
I strove in prayer with no uncertain sound;
I fed the poor for many miles around;
In sickness, very patient have I lain.
In uttermost obedience did I dwell,
In suffering and poverty as well;
Yes, I was chaste and happy in my cell,
So far as my poor powers could attain.
Famished and weak, I fasted many a day;
Dried up by heat and pierced by cold I lay;
I was a pilgrim on a weary way,
Or so it seemed, in sunshine and in rain.
To pray, I daily rose before the sun;
Mass did I hear before the dark was done;
To tierce and nones and vespers would I run,
And, after compline, still to watch was fain.
And then was said to me a scornful word:
—Deep in my heart the poisoned arrow stirred,—
At once my tongue was ready when I heard,
With fierce and burning fury to complain.
Now see how great and wealthy I must be!
I heap my gains for all the world to see;
Yet one poor word so fiercely angers me,
That I must strive to pardon it in vain!

Affectation of learning was to him an acute source of discipline, and one notes that it is pride of intellect, not learning which he condemns—that for instance, in laude xv.11 and xxx1, he "expresses merely the contempt felt by the inheritor of a solid culture and an unassailable social tradition for the thinly-veneered imitation—the intellectual 'beggar on horse-back.'" The works characteristic of his middle period are "remarkable for their insistence

on order and measure.” “There is something deeply impressive,” Miss Underhill says, “in the spectacle of this vehement nature thus capitulating to the austere Augustinian concept of love as to the very principle of order itself at the moment in which it is still swept by the tempest of feeling—ready to justify its own impassioned state.”

Having triumphed over the senses and the will, the supreme achievement yet remained to him—the conquest of the spirit. He finds that “still the busy intellect has not been put in its place. It continues to possess its own ideas, and therefore to be possessed by its own limitations. Entangled in these, it ranges around, seeking to understand; only to find that the brick-built conceptual universe intervenes between it and reality.” This transcendence of separateness, says Jacopone, “is the testing-house where the academic and the real mystic part company. The first is still held in the realm of speculation; lofty indeed yet tethered to the earth like a captive balloon. The second has the free flight of a bird . . . not needing to see because it is at home.” Jacopone was imprisoned by Pope Boniface VIII in 1298, and we infer that it was at this time that he entered upon his third stage of mystical development. Only life can speak of life, and his words are testimony to the fact of an unprecedented vital force within. He speaks of personal oppositions having at last been transcended and says that he is “no longer troubled by the temptation to take an interest in his food,” that “when it is nice, he refers its flavours to God” but that he permits himself such gratitude only as is permitted to those who can refer everything to God. In the attainment of power through acceptance of the untoward circumstances of life, he reminds one of the live oak which cannot be killed by cutting, with its tent-like foliage and contradictory intricateness of growth. The genius for attaining to sphere after sphere of spiritual development is a secret even when explained, but what Boethius has defined as the “total and perfect possession of unlimited life at a single moment” seems less far removed from the world of experience when its transcendence is seen to stand out in as bold relief as in the present instance.

It is, as Miss Underhill says, Jacopone's poems upon which we base our knowledge of his inner life. The Italian text of certain of these laude is printed at the end of the book with the translation beside it. The selections vary in interest but each is a work of marked individuality. The author's ability to sustain a key, his passion for symmetry, and the dramatic instinct are apparent throughout. Repetition, the bane of some writing, is in the laude a powerful adjunct and the writer's accomplished use of accent is a rare delight. Although one involuntarily prefers the language in which the poems are written, to a translation, it is due the translator to note that the English version has here and there more charm than the original, as in the lines (Lauda xxv):

“My vanity is lying in the tomb;

My flesh decayed, my bones take little room;"
and (Lauda c)
"O human nature, dark and poor and low,
Like withered grass a-droop for death to mow."

In the Italian, more is presented to the eye at a glance than in the English; the correspondence between the rhythm and the frame of mind of the writer is also more apparent in the Italian than in the English; one tone-deaf and form-blind must admit the felicity of the opening lines of *Lauda xxv*:

"Quando t'alegri, omo de altura
va', pone mente a la sepultura."

Our religious consciousness to-day, is so far removed from the mediaeval consciousness in its expression of love for God in terms of human love, that we can but theoretically enter into Jacopone's imagery; nevertheless, it is clearly depersonalized passion of which we read.

In *Lauda xc*—the *Amor de Caritate*—the velocity, concentration, and irrepressible expansiveness of the writer's nature converge to a most august expression. Quoting, with omissions:

"Glowing and flaming, refuge finding none,
My heart is fettered fast, it cannot flee;
It is consumed, like wax set in the sun;
Living, yet dying, swooning passionately,
It prays for strength a little way to run,
Yet in this furnace must it bide and be:
Where am I led, ah me!
To depths so high?
Living I die,
So fierce the fire of love."

"For I have lost my heart, my will, my wit,
My hopes, desires, my pleasures and my taste;
Beauty seems vile, corruption crawls on it,
Riches, delights and honours all are waste."

"My friends, who loved me, called me oft away,
Far from this bitter path, this arid track;
But how can kingship sink to serfdom? nay—
Who gives himself hath given and takes not back."

"Now we are one, we are not separate;
Fire cannot part us nor a sword divide;
Not pain nor death can reach these heights so great
Where Love hath snatched and set me by His side:
Far, far below, I see the world gyrate,
Far, far above, my heart is satisfied."

In preparing the life, Miss Underhill has been at pains to put one in possession of all her sources, and that the subject's spirit should make the impression on one that it does, so different in the resonant note that it strikes, from that made on one by other Christian mystics and mediaeval writers, is the result of no mere abstract literary intention. The biographer's comprehension of the worldly accomplishments of her subject and her equal insight into his spiritual attainments, is strikingly the counterpart of that two-sidedness which she emphasizes in the man himself—his instinct for the superlative among those interests which are transient, and his ability to unfold the most intensive of mystical doctrines.

The bibliography apart from its immediate value as indicating the sources of the present work, will be of service to those interested in the whole subject of Christian mysticism.

MARIANNE MOORE.

POETS AND PREFACES

New Poems. By D. H. Lawrence. 12mo. 78 Pages.

B. W. Huebsch. New York.

Otherworld. By F. S. Flint. 22mo. 66 Pages. The Poetry Book Shop. London. England.

The New Adam. By Louis Untermeyer. 12mo. 120 Pages. Harcourt, Brace And Howe. New York.

Lesbia And Other Poems. By Arthur Symons. 12mo. 142 Pages. E. P. Dutton And Company. New York.

THE work of contemporary English and American poets is distinguished, like that of a certain Irish playwright, by their prefaces. Thomas Hardy and Edwin Arlington Robinson do not seem to feel the necessity for preface-writing, and a few others abroad and at home are similarly reticent. But with many—poets of the calibre of John Gould Fletcher, F. S. Flint, Louis Untermeyer, and, inevitably, Amy Lowell—the preface is the thing wherewith to catch the conscience of the critic. Illuminating as much of this prefatory work is, there is often a flavour of falsity about it: a tinsel glitter and a thin metallic clash that reminds one of the showman before his booth: and this in spite of the fact that the poets state, quite truly, that what they have to offer is caviar to the general and less than prose to M Jourdain.

What they are chiefly concerned with is, in fact, the difference between prose and poetry. The effort of the poet to clarify it for a reluctant audience is much like the effort of M Bergson to prove the weakness of the intellect by an elaborate intellectual structure. *L'Evolution Créatrice* is a masterpiece of rationalization. By the same token, it is by their prose, rather than by their poetry, that many contemporaries try to prove that what they are writing is poetry and not prose.

It is a truism that we move easily through life until a sphinx blocks our journey. All this argument about it and about has its origins in some definite obstacle to poetic progress. It began, perhaps, with the discovery that poetry was encroaching upon the field of prose, and the latter was jealous of her domain. It may conclude with the discovery that prose is encroaching upon that of poetry. The prose of Dorothy Richardson, for example, dealing with the unexciting world of a dental secretary, is imagistic, if the word imagist has any meaning. Miss Richardson uses the exact word, she does not copy old rhythms, she renders particulars exactly, she is hard and clear—she is concentrated: only an artist concentrating with terrible intensity upon moments could use five volumes to cover three trivial years. The same is true to a degree of James Joyce. He certainly believes “passionately in the artistic value of modern life,” and more especially in the artistic value of vulgar life. But both Joyce and Richardson are dealing with consciousness which is directed by emotion, so that the algebraic character of prose is eliminated from their work; and we have that trespassing upon the kingdom and the power of the poets which leads these to look to their glory.

“In the immediate present there is no perfection, no consummation, nothing finished. The strands are all flying, quivering, intermingling into the web, the waters are shaking the moon. There is no round consummated moon on the face of running water, nor on the face of the unfinished tide. There are no germs of the living plasm. The living plasm vibrates unspeakably, it inhales the future, it exhales the past, it is the quick of both, and yet it is neither. There is no plasmic finality, nothing crystal, permanent. If we try to fix the living tissue, as the biologists fix it with formation, we have only a hardened bit of the past, the bygone life under our observation.”

This is not, what it well might be, an excerpt from a criticism of either of the two novelists just mentioned. It is part of D. H. Lawrence's preface to his *New Poems*. Instead of emotion recollected in tranquillity, the contemporary poet seeks “mutation, swifter than iridescence, haste, not rest, come-and-go, not fixity, inconclusiveness, immediacy, the quality of life itself, without *dé nouement* or close.” But this is what the prose writers also are seeking. Hence, perhaps, in part at least, the need for explanation and examination.

In the preface to F. S. Flint's latest volume, *Otherworld*, he carries the connection further by declaring that for the poets he has in mind

“there are two forms, which are really one, the first being prose and the second . . . unrhymed cadence. The one merges into the other; there is no boundary line between them; but prose, generally, will be used for the more objective branches of writing—for novels, plays, essays, and so on . . . cadence will be used for personal, emotional, lyric utterances, in which the phrasing goes

with a stronger beat and the words live together with an intenser flame.”

In concluding, Flint summarizes his three propositions:

“the first being that poetry is a quality of all artistic writing, independent of form; the second that rhyme and metre are artificial and external additions to poetry and that, as the various changes that could be rung upon them were worked out, they grew more and more insipid, until they have become contemptible and encumbering; and the third that the artistic form of the future is prose, with cadence—a more strongly accented variety of prose in the oldest English tradition—for lyrical expression.”

The last of these propositions is acceptable only if one swallows the second of them whole. This is a little difficult to do. Because men reject rhyme and metre to-day as insipid, contemptible, and encumbering, is all the more reason why they should accept them to-morrow as liberating, noble, and pungent. If imagism, futurism, and Dadaism have taught us anything, they have taught us that art, like the life it reflects, is a pendulum, swinging forward and back from classicism to romanticism, from convention to anarchy, from sophistication to naiveté. Anarchy, for that matter, is itself a convention. Naiveté is the challenge of the highly sophisticated artist.

But Flint's first proposition, that poetry is a quality of all artistic writing, seems to hold water. One can readily accept a paragraph by James or one by Conrad, a page of Flaubert or of Santayana as shining with the glamour that lights up the strophes of Shelley and breaks through the cadences of Flint. Ezra Pound says that poetry is affirmation. One may go a step beyond both Flint and Pound and say that this is so because the reaction of the artist to life, even in its uglier and more vulgar aspects, is like the impulse of the lover, who more than any other man is a yea-sayer. Not for nothing do Pound and Yeats use the vocabulary of love in dealing with art. The elder Yeats speaks of the sustained desire of the artist; William Butler Yeats of his trial by fire. It is because poetry, like the supreme human relation, like the saint's striving after perfection, or the self-dedication of the revolutionist, is one of the varieties of religious experience.

Poetry feeds on comparison, not on contrast. Metaphor exceeds simile. The Chinese stop-short, the Japanese hokku, give no more than a hint of the poet's meaning. Comparison and metaphor are the language of love. Implication and a larger or lesser mystery the very body of religion. Every man is a poet when he is in love. Every poet is, in some sort at least, a lover. Why then do the lyric utterances of our contemporaries differ from those of Symonds' generation, or even of Henley's? Is it merely that the expression is different, that these reject an exhausted technique? Has poetry become something greater or something other than this ardour of affirmation?

According to Louis Untermeyer, whose latest book is an exciting embodiment of his theory, the poetry of love itself is changing. He says:

"In the last few years, we have been witnessing a return to the upright vigor, the wide and healthy curiosity of our outspoken ancestors . . . poets like Thomas Hardy, Lascelles Abercrombie, Rupert Brooke, Edwin Arlington Robinson, and, most notably of all, D. H. Lawrence, are writing dramatic lyrics and monologs that reveal the loved one as fully as they express the lover."

He might have added Louis Untermeyer to his list, but it is clear that he could not have included Arthur Symons, whose *Lesbia* looks a little odd and unreal clothed in the Satanic flame and scented hair of 1890.

Modern English love poetry seems to draw on the sources of Richard Dehmel or even Otto Julius Bierbaum for that queer composite of physical excitement and spiritual wealth which it celebrates in the tongue of Pope and Shelley, Tennyson and Rossetti. It is true that men like Lawrence and Flint and Untermeyer are freeing themselves from a Scylla in the image of Queen Victoria and a Charybdis in the guise of a long, lank Lilith. But it is not merely that they are returning to "the upright vigor, the wide and healthy curiosity of our outspoken ancestors." The frankness of the Germans has its roots in a point of view different from our own regarding the great constringent relation between man and woman. Even Browning, to whom all honour, had not studied Freud, or Adler, or Jung, or even Steinach (though some of James Lee's wife's utterances might make one think so). The releases of the world war, which is overthrowing the old mores in sexual as well as other social relations, were unknown to Tennyson, and must have a certain curious unreality to Symons, if he is aware of them.

The new poetry, like the new prose, is affirmative, but it affirms our peculiar *Welfanschauung*. Flint's *Love Song for a Woman I Do Not Love*, like his older poem *Accident*, Lawrence's *Seven Seals*, Untermeyer's *Summer Storm* are not paralleled in English love lyrics of the last century not because the emotions of those elder poets were different, nor because they were ignorant, as Untermeyer truly claims, of the Woman they worshipped with a capital W. The difference lies deeper. They were ignorant also of the springs of their own impulses. Symons writes,

"I cannot, having been your lover,
Stoop to become your friend."

Untermeyer writes,

"Will you not give yourself a desperate trial
And, much forgetting, learn to comprehend
Love, that is less a father than a friend?"

The situations are admittedly and obviously distinct. But the author of *Lesbia*, whose traditions are nineteenth-century traditions, would not think of treating what his successor bluntly calls “Neurosis.”

Contemporary poetry, like contemporary prose, is at once a reaction and a revolution. Joyce is coarse, but he is not Rabelaisian. Lawrence is frank, but he is not John Donne. Art is a wheel that touches the ground with the same surface again and again, but that after all is driving forward. “O2 sont les neiges d'antan?” Buried in Bergson's revolving snowball. Poetry is like love; but as love grows more self-conscious, poetry is likewise. more analytical and sometimes tormented. It is not mere honesty that sets the moderns off even from Browning and Meredith. It is knowledge, or the groping toward knowledge. The prose writers are engaged with the stream of consciousness. The poets are aware that the images they employ and the dreams they dream have a background in primitive impulse and barbarous taboo. Their need for self-explanation may be really rooted in a subconscious fear of their own iconoclasm—of substance even more than of technique.

Lawrence's immediacy and Flint's cadences are directed toward a more vivid content, a subtler manner. But these are embodied in a poetry “that searches even while it sings.” Agreeing with Untermeyer, one can go a step beyond, demanding a poetry that searches not only the beloved, but probes, as Browning could not and as Symonds would not do, the very stuff of love itself: a poetry which is like love in its affirmation, and, too, in its fusion of the empiric body with the ardour of the mind.

BABETTE DEUTSCH